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Spectral Belief in Early Modern England and Protestant Germany

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Ghosts of Place and Spirits of War: Spectral Belief in Early Modern England and Protestant Germany

Aidan Anthony O'Lynn

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance
with the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of
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Abstract

This thesis focuses on themes of place and war in the development of ghostlore in Early Modern Protestant Germany and England. It reconstructs an enchanted world, one where ghosts and spirits were not tied down to simple Catholic or Protestant tropes but were more multifaceted than previous studies have shown. Stressing continuities between the medieval period and what followed, it shows how ghosts continued to embody anxieties of place, experience and morality. Emphasising the importance of place within legend telling and ghost stories, it recreates a landscape of memory whose bounds, both physical and moral, were patrolled by spirits. Looking at war, we see how the intense experience of conflict and its aftermath were negotiated through spirit tropes, how these lessons were applied to wider society's morality and how war was a catalyst for ghost belief.

It shows how Protestants, like Catholics before them, had attempted to appropriate and impose order upon these spirits, places and experiences. It shows how Protestantism not only competed with Catholic teachings on spirits but also confronted more atavistic models of spirit belief with varying degrees of success. A key current throughout the thesis is whereas theologians argued an overarching theory of the supernatural, popular belief, on the other hand, was held in bundle form. Therefore, it justifies a closer look at how spirits operated in certain environments and experiences.

This thesis complements existing English studies on spirits and introduces a German ghostlore largely unknown to the British reader. By a deep reading of contemporary ghost stories, set in the place and describing the experience of haunting, we can see the relevance these tales embodied in the moralities they contained, the bounds they set and the proofs they encapsulated.

Dedication and Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank the AHRC and the University of Bristol for funding my project and their patience over these past few years. I would like to thank my supervisor, Ronald Hutton, for reading my work and his help throughout.

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Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Phuong, for her patience and support throughout. I could not have done this if she had not been at my side all these years.

Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's *Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes* and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED: Aidan Anthony O'Lynn DATE: 30 July 2018

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Introduction

I send *lacks* with Lanthorns, and *Will* with Wisps to Marshes and Fens, to allure benighted Travellers out of their way, over Hedges, and drown them in Ditches, I send out the Fairies and Elves to Dance and Revel together by Moon-light, and encourage the Gamesters to look under the Gallows for the Four of Clubs; I raise at Mid-night the silent Ghosts from their Dormities, wrapt in a sheet to plague their negligent Heirs, for not performing those Vows they made to them at their Deaths; I command Spirits to haunt old Monasteries, and uninhabited castles, and to strangle all that come to Lodge there, till some resolute fellows compells them to discover the treasure they so long have Brooded over...I clatter the doors when they are fast bolted, and invisibly humble the Dishes and Glasses without breaking them...I let loose the Hobgoblin against the *Christmas* Holy days, and order him to rowl a Barrel, draw a Chain, or hutry a Coach along Streets in the Night, that he may have the happy opportunity of wringing off their Necks that look out at Windows...I send the Goblins, the Shodmule, the Nightmare, the Sprites, the Hobgoblins, the Hags, the Night-bats, the Break-necks, the black Men and green Women, the Familiars, the Pugs, the Ghosts, and the Shadow. In fine I am the Prince of the Airs *Vice-Roy*, Deputy Lieutenant to the degraded Seraphin, the fairy Protector, the Jew-Errant, the High Priest of the Holy Cross, the Genius of *Nostredamus*, the Doemon of *Mascoon*, and the Drummer of *Tedworth*.¹

This thesis will consider how place and war were integral elements in the making of spectral beliefs in the early modern period. By examining sources from England and Germany, I intend to reconstruct the understanding of what ghosts were, the social roles they performed and the anxieties they encapsulated in these two Protestant societies. I propose that the intimate links between spirits and places which embodied issues of identity, anxiety and morality were major factors in the persistence of ghost belief. I will show how and why haunted places stayed haunted throughout the period. I will also show how the spectres seen in wartime

¹ Anon, *A Magical Vision, or, A Perfect Discovery of the Fallacies of Witchcraft as it was lately represented in a Pleasant Sweet Dream / to a Holy Sweet Sister ... for Preservation of the Saints from being tainted with the Heresies of the Congregations of the Doe-Littles* (London, 1673), 14-21.

enabled the emergence of a truly Protestantised ghostlore in the late seventeenth century. Ghosts and spirits never went away with the Reformation. They were too powerful to be driven off. Instead, they needed to be appropriated and rebranded and enlisted to fight on the Protestant side.

This thesis will show how varied the supernatural was and how ghosts cannot be reduced to the simplified monolithic tropes pushed by theologians, either Protestant or Catholic. It will recreate the hyper-enchanted mindset of the period. Ghosts and supernatural beliefs persisted because they were relevant. They imposed order on the world, on places and experiences and gave names to these anxieties. This thesis addresses how Protestants in England and Germany encountered and interacted with pre-existing folkloric ghost traditions, how they theologised these systems and attempted to make them their own. It will argue that instead of tearing down traditional folklores, Protestantism had to engage with existing structures, tropes and metaphors of belief and expression and that ultimately Protestantism was merely one shade of gloss applied on top of many others. It was not a gloss that totally obscured what went before, nor was it one that covered the entire edifice of belief but rather one that was thickly laid in places but more sparsely, if at all, in others. This thesis will argue that the Protestant encounter with ghosts was not as dramatic a break as other studies have suggested. It will also show that the Gothic movement of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one fixated on ghosts, ruins and the forces of nature, can trace its roots back to late medieval and early modern period understandings of a spirit infested landscape.

This thesis will demonstrate that ghosts played a critical role in popular understandings of morality and justice written onto landscape and experiences as well as being a form of demotic history. They could complement the official narrative, but they could also provide rival understandings depending on audience and time. They were a means of remembering the past, understanding the present and predicting the future.

My methodological approach relies on a close reading of contemporary ghost stories and encounters with spirits. This study will show the vast variety and multiple nature of hauntings. By looking at themes of place and war, we will be able to understand why ghosts were placed in certain places and why they appeared in certain situations more often than others. Theologians impose order from the top down. By looking from the bottom up, from a range of places, situations and experiences, we will instead approach the supernatural from an

angle more potentially recognisable to the early modern popular mindset, one determined more by local circumstances and more open to rival interpretations.

What are Ghosts?

Ghosts are entities found in almost every society, in the past and in the present, in Europe and indeed across the globe. It is part of the human makeup to wonder about what happens after death and to seek meaning and negotiate loss when that vital spark no longer inhabits the body, when that living personality has been extinguished or has travelled elsewhere. Arguably, we all become ghosts at death, our presence no longer a constant in this realm of the living, figures whose memory flickers, dims and finally goes out the longer we lie in the realm of the dead. However, some of us are clearly not in the place meant us. Some of us, for good or most usually ill, linger on in a world no longer ours and do not cross over into the silent realm of our ancestors. People claim they have actually seen or sensed this presence of the dead. Tales and legends relate the encounters of others with these spirits. Many of these stories focus on ensuring ghosts rest in peace by literally making peace between the spirit and human society, between the dead and the living. Other more malevolent spirits need to be forcibly expelled from this world and returned to the darkness where they have always, or, from now on, will reside. Ghosts are the closest supernatural entities to men and women, combining themes of pain, grief and suffering as well as love and affection. They are a reminder that the wicked in this life will be punished, if not in the pits of hell, then as lonely outcasts on this plane, tied to the scene of their crimes. They are warnings to the living either by the messages they impart or by their very status as restless spirits.

For the believer, they are proof of the existence of continuation beyond death, for a system of justice that in turn affirms the values and moralities which interprets them thus. They testify to the power and necessity of the rituals and beliefs that vanquish them and to those who mediate these. For the non-believer and sceptic on the other hand, they are often mere bogeymen indicative of the ignorance, gullibility and fear of those age groups, classes and societies who have not yet come to sense, far from the currents and centres of modernity, still enthralled to the old authorities and learning. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood

behind me. Ghosts fall victim to this perception of them as not being deserving of serious research, mere bogeys conjured up by old peasant women. Fortunately, this is changing. This thesis will show why ghosts are worthy of such study.

Ghosts combine themes of anxiety, uncertainty and contradiction. They not only embody the contradictions, lack of knowledge and speculation about what happens after death but also the very nature of an event and the reliability of its witnesses. Ghost stories are open to debate with rival interpretations offered for what happened if indeed anything happened in the first place. The process of inferring what or who it was is not only dependent on what the cultural authorities deem it to be but also the setting in which it occurred and the people who reported it. They not only make implications on the memory of the person presumed to appear but also on the authority and reliability of its witnesses.

They are told, remembered and recycled for various reasons, both orally and in print. In the serious tomes that come down to us, they are often cast as proofs of the afterlife, the wiles of Satan and the errors of the Church of Rome among others. Yet, we should remember that stories depend on an audience and that any audience is not necessarily passive. The preacher and polemicist might recount a tale to prove the righteousness of their cause, the iniquity and error of their foes as well as disciplining their flocks by putting the fear of God into them. The young man or woman might tell essentially the same story but in order to further an intimacy which the same preacher would rile against in his pulpit. The grandmother might tell her infant charges the tale with the purpose of quietening them and yet be condemned by her betters for raising up a generation steeped in fear. Though reasons differ in the purpose of telling, they are told and retold precisely because they are entertaining and capture the attention of the listeners or readers. These stories are relevant and useful. In this study, I will look at many of the tales which were part of the makeup of the early modern mind. They were some of the stories and legends of the learned and not so learned, told to make sense of the world around them.

Ghosts and historians should be close bedfellows. Ghost stories are potentially the earliest exposure anyone has in their life to history. They are colourful and catch the attention of the public, reaching out to a wide non-academic audience. They simplify history, reducing it to a morality play of easily digestible bite-sized chunks in a memorable format. They may not be strictly historical in that the events related actually happened, but they embody all the

debates that rage regarding the very nature of the subject. In ways ghost stories are a very demotic form of history but one that has been heavily influenced by the medium of print which it in turn also influences. Though they may be despised, they still contain many of the cultural values of the society that tells them and still perform a function and reflect its structures while simultaneously trying to make sense of the unknown and mortality.

Why Germany and England?

Protestant Germany and England are excellent subjects for a joint study on ghosts and spirit belief in this period. Both saw themselves as standard bearers of the Reformation and defined themselves sharply in their polemic against what they considered as popish and ultimately foreign. Both were originally pagan, northern European, Germanic cultures with either a Celtic or Slav fringe and underlay with which they were at odds culturally, and often in matters of religion too. Both countries had thriving print industries. Both Germany and England experienced an extremely brutal seventeenth century with the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) and British Civil Wars (1642-1651) respectively. Both were defined afterwards by the memory of the turbulence and devastation of the period, one that religion was often blamed for.

Even today, both nations see themselves as uniquely haunted and ghost-ridden.² Owen Davies claims that ghost belief is much greater in England and America, both originally Protestant countries than elsewhere.³ This was despite a Reformation which explicitly denied the status of these spectres as the souls of the dead and one that triumphantly crowed at times, that ghost-seeing had been banished over the Alps, to unhappy lands still in thrall to the Pope. These currents of Weberian modernity stand uncomfortably alongside a fascination with ghosts and the occult that characterised the Gothic movement which emerged in the late eighteenth century in both countries.⁴ It will be clear from this thesis that the gothic fixation on spirits and ruins, as well as the ambivalence felt towards Catholicism and the past, can be traced directly back to the Reformation and the development of ghost belief in early

² O. Davies, *The Haunted: A Social History of Ghosts* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 1; C. Lecouteux, *The Secret History of Poltergeists and Haunted Houses: From Pagan Folklore to Modern Manifestation* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2012), 3.

³ Davies, *Haunted*, 243.

⁴ A. Shell, *Oral Culture and Catholicism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 50.

modern England and Germany. Peter Marshall suggested that Protestantism 'had lost the plot' with these spirits, one that enabled a more varied and dreadful spectre to emerge from the constraints Purgatorial tropes had formerly imposed.⁵ This thesis will examine this hypothesis for both countries and refute this by showing how the plot was already dreadful and complex.

It will introduce an early modern German ghostlore which has been largely invisible to the English reader. It is not the intention of this study to trace a comparative development of the supernatural in lockstep in either country, based on a dialectic between German and English theologians and intellectuals and their works. Such studies have been done before and are invariably divided into a tripartite staging reflecting elite intellectual ambivalence and anxieties towards the ghost. This gravitated from their initial vehement rejection by reformers in the sixteenth century, to their subsequent reincorporation into Protestant learned treatises and cheap print texts as agents of punishment, justice and Providence in the mid to later seventeenth century and as proof of a world of spirits. This staging then concluded with their final exit from the learned debate as ghost-seeing lost its intellectual authority and was relegated entirely to the realms of the imagination, whether that be of the artist or the pathologist. It follows a very Protestant and liberal theory of history as a journey from darkness into light, a battle where knowledge and wisdom finally trump ignorance and superstition. A strictly chronological study can trace elite trends in understandings of spirits but it will be of less use in attempting to discern what popular belief and attitudes actually were. I want to turn away from the idea that theologians alone had any monopoly of this subject and instead look at the wider settings in which ghosts operated, namely those of place, which are critical to spectral legends and belief, and war, which in turn made many spectres. A thematic study will prove more useful here.

The major medieval cultural studies of ghosts by J.C. Schmitt, Claude Lecouteux and Nancy Caciola rely on sources from across western and northern Europe and are not restricted to a focus on ghosts purely in the territory of a modern-day nation-state. Kathryn Edwards has called for a wider transnational and trans-confessional look at ghosts in early modern Europe.

⁵ P. Marshall, 'Transformations of the Ghost Story in post-Reformation England', in H.C. O'Briain and J.A. Stevens (eds), *The Ghost Story from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), 33.

Citing them as ‘a universal experience’, she said such a study ‘would highlight the extent to which belief in ghosts reveals fundamental principles about how early modern Europeans conceived of this world, the other world, and their place in both’, by examining ‘their commonalities and differences’.⁶ This thesis covers some of this ground. It will focus overwhelmingly on the Protestant experience though it is necessary to include Catholic tropes and understandings of the supernatural at times. This is to understand the context from which Protestantism developed, and against which it defined itself. It is also intended, when applicable, to show continuity between the medieval and early modern periods and between Catholic and Protestant conceptions of apparitions. We must also remember that large swathes of popular belief, not least on ghosts, was at various times condemned as a relic of Romanism and that the lower classes were depicted as preferring to wallow in such superstition rather than the true light of the Word or Reason.

A broader sweep of sources can make themes stand out more clearly. This is especially true when looking at how early moderns understood haunted places and spectres in war. We can see similarities between ghostly funeral processions in Germany and spectral lights in Wales. Both societies share remarkably similar beliefs at the folkloric level concerning death portents. Likewise, we will meet many spectral tropes present in the German record but absent in the English. At one level this may indicate that it indeed was absent from the English folkloric tradition. Physical grave-based revenants are the most prominent example of this as points of difference between the two countries. They are (arguably) entirely absent from the early modern English understanding of ghosts but present in the German tradition. This is most likely due to the late Christianisation of much of northern and eastern Germany and the presence of a Slavic underlay and periphery in this region. However, with other ghostly tropes, this is less clear cut. There is the possibility, one I strongly suggest in this thesis, that many spirit tropes were simply not recorded in the English record of the time. The most obvious examples were those that haunted graveyards. They were not seen as worth recording and were dismissed as the tales of women and the old. They also potentially reflected earlier Catholic paradigms of spirits, one Protestant writers felt uncomfortable with.

⁶ K.A. Edwards, ‘The History of Ghosts in Early Modern Europe: Recent Research and Future Trajectories’, *History Compass*, 10 (2012), 360-1.

Throughout my research, I have been struck by the degree to which the early modern German record on ghosts is much richer, both in volume and variety, than what I found for England. The obvious question is whether this signals in any way a darker German mindset, one more preoccupied with the supernatural than say what the English mindset was presumed to be. It is a difficult question. We should be aware of the differences between England and Germany. For a start, England in 1603 had a population of approximately 4 million, Ireland around 1.5 million and Scotland just under a million.⁷ The Holy Roman Empire on the other hand, of which Germany was the major part, had over 20 million inhabitants in 1618.⁸ At one level, differences in population must be a factor as the Empire had up to five times as many inhabitants as England. Furthermore, whereas England was governed by a single crown, one which claimed and exercised sovereignty to various degrees in this period over Ireland and Scotland, Germany was administered by over 1,300 territorial rulers. One price for greater political stability was the undue influence London and the south-east of England exercised throughout the rest of the realm. Until the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695, almost all print had to go through London.⁹ Cheap print then reflected the concerns of the capital rather than a broader national picture. One positive consequence of German disunity and particularism was that printing presses operated across various cities in the Empire, providing an explanation for the greater number of local ghost stories and reports in comparison to England. Town chronicles were one source of tales where the German record was particularly rich. The ghosts one encounters therein were different to the spirits one met in anti-atheist tracts or English cheap print. Instead of proving the fallacy of Catholics or atheists or the penetrative gaze of the all-seeing eye of Providence, they were more interested in recording a tale which was part of the history of a location. Though sometimes the author felt a need to dismiss such stories as relics of papist superstition, they were still recorded as they were part of the history of that place.

Another major factor to be considered was that of religion. Catholicism was, despite the scares, a much more foreign and distant menace to English Protestants than it was to German Protestants. To the north lay a Calvinist Scotland but the nearest Catholic lands lay across the

⁷ G. Parker, *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 324-5.

⁸ Parker, *Global Crisis*, 211.

⁹ S. Handley, *Visions of an Unseen World: Ghost Beliefs and Stories in Eighteenth Century England* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007), 69.

sea in Ireland and France. The British Civil Wars were largely fought between Protestants. This was again in sharp contrast to the situation in Germany where Lutherans, Calvinists and Catholics shared borders with each other and where the titular head of the Empire was a Catholic. Conflicts, most famously the Schmalkaldic War (1546-47) and the Thirty Years War (1618-48), were nominally struggles between Protestants and Catholics. It is notable that there was no home-grown English treatise on ghosts before the mid-seventeenth century.¹⁰ This contrasted with the number of tracts on the continent and across Germany. One explanation was that there was indeed a greater need to develop a Protestant theory of ghosts to delegitimise one's Catholic opponents whilst affirming the righteousness and effectiveness of Protestant teaching and praxis. Though riven at times by civil strife as in the War of the Roses, the Tudor rebellions, the Civil War, the disputes of the 1680s leading up to the Glorious Revolution and then later Jacobite risings, England was more immune to the threat of political chaos and warfare than its continental neighbours. Most importantly, the Channel and Irish Sea patrolled by a strong navy separated it from its closest neighbours and staved off the immediate threat of invasion. This contrasted with a confessionally and politically divided Holy Roman Empire and Germany at conflict with itself. Furthermore, Germany was surrounded by strong neighbours such as Denmark, Sweden, France, Poland, Turkey, the Netherlands and Spain among others, all of whom had an interest and means to keep it divided.

This study primarily uses German and English language sources to reconstruct ghost belief for the early modern period in Protestant Germany and England. As a result, the record for England is heavily skewed towards sources printed in London. For Germany, most sources were published in Protestant cities in the north and centre, the traditional heartlands of the Reformation. My central focus is on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though my primary sources run well into the eighteenth century. As is the case with many early modern studies, it is easier to say when this one starts (with the traditional commencement of the Reformation in 1517) than when it ends. It is also difficult to set precise time limits on studies into popular belief, as Owen Davies has shown for witchcraft beliefs, which despite falling off

¹⁰ P. Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 233.

the radar of elite interest in the early eighteenth century, continued among the people much longer.¹¹

Though most of my sources will focus on Protestant Germany and England, we will at times make forays into neighbouring regions and countries that include Ireland, Bohemia, and Silesia, among others. In these cases, we will rely on English or German language sources and thus understand it as their encounter with something potentially foreign. However, we must remember that there were substantial English and German connections with their 'peripheries' and events in places like Ireland and Bohemia were critical to crises in both countries in the seventeenth century.

Historiography

Peter Marshall emphasised how ghost belief straddled two paradigms of Reformation historiography, the first being the 'revisionist' model, 'stressing the resilience of traditional cultures and their imperviousness to reform', in opposition to the 'post-revisionist' one which emphasised 'the potential of Protestantism to shape and influence these cultures while not obliterating their ties to the past'.¹² These two themes likewise dominate this work.

Scott Dixon described the sixteenth-century German popular mindset as one where 'there were no unbridgeable special or mental borders separating the sacred from the profane. The supernatural was everywhere'.¹³ Dixon noted that with the Reformation, 'two different world views were at a crossroads', with those of the parishioners clashing with the more 'systematic terms' of the clergy.¹⁴ Ghosts were one battlefield in what has been termed 'the reform of popular culture' or 'acculturation of the world'.¹⁵ Society was confessionalised through a process of disciplining. Dixon noted the 'theologisation' of traditional folklore.¹⁶ Focusing on magic, but equally appropriate for ghosts, Dixon commented that 'Protestant pastors began

¹¹ O. Davies, *Witchcraft, Magic and Culture 1736-1951* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

¹² Marshall, *Beliefs*, 262.

¹³ C.S. Dixon, *The Reformation and Rural Society: The Parishes of Brandenburg-Ansbach-Kulmbach 1528-1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 189.

¹⁴ Dixon, *Reformation and Rural Society*, 188-9.

¹⁵ Dixon, *Reformation and Rural Society*, 189.

¹⁶ Dixon, *Reformation and Rural Society*, 191.

to focus on the episodes of daily life and see the devil at every turn'.¹⁷ This contrasted sharply with views of the demonic which 'was not regarded by the laity with the same abhorrence as it was by clergy or theologian'.¹⁸ What resulted was 'an unprecedented process of dissimulation', as on one side, there were the people, and on the other, the authorities who 'were in search of tidy answers to sorted questions and they forced the parishioners to organise their thoughts'.¹⁹ However, both sides adapted at turns, and to degrees, to the other. The parishioners were not passive subjects, nor were the clergy unwilling to engage with folkloric models.²⁰ Citing the model of the Christianisation of Mesoamerica, one Alexandra Walsham supported, Dixon observed 'people were not converted, beliefs were not abandoned; aspects of popular belief were simply invested with different values until the original context of thought was shattered'.²¹ It was 'not the erasure of one tradition of beliefs by another, but its gradual distortion', one that resulted in 'Protestant forms of magic'.²² It is within this context that this thesis is set as I attempt to reconstruct ghost belief for the period.

Any study of early modern ghosts invariably quotes Keith Thomas' famous observation that ghost belief in the sixteenth century was 'a shibboleth which distinguished Protestant from Catholic almost as effectively as belief in the mass or papal supremacy'.²³ It was an issue 'Protestant teaching 'seems to have been remarkably firm upon...certainly, it was much firmer than subsequent generations appreciated'.²⁴ In Catholic teaching, ghosts could be the souls of the departed asking for help through Purgatory. In sixteenth-century Protestant teaching, on the other hand, the ghost was either a demon impersonating the dead, a product of monkish trickery and jugglery, or a creature of one's own imagination and mistaken senses.

¹⁷ Dixon, *Reformation and Rural Society*, 191.

¹⁸ R.W. Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London: Hambledon Press, 1987), 13.

¹⁹ Dixon, *Reformation and Rural Society*, 192; C.S. Dixon, 'Popular Beliefs and the Reformation in Brandenburg-Ansbach', in B. Scribner and T. Johnson (eds), *Popular Religion in Germany and Central Europe, 1400-1800* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996), 138.

²⁰ Dixon, 'Popular Beliefs', 128,

²¹ Dixon, *Reformation and Rural Society*, 201; A. Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 331.

²² Dixon, 'Popular Beliefs', 138.

²³ K. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England* (London: Penguin, 1991), 703.

²⁴ Thomas, *Religion*, 702.

Despite this, ghost-seeing continued and 'was to be found among almost all religious groups and at virtually every social level'.²⁵

Bob Scribner, on the other hand, maintained that 'Protestantism was never quite sure what to make of ghosts'. However, he did acknowledge that 'the boundaries between sacred and secular remained highly porous', with 'highly unpredictable, incalculable, and even dangerous' seepage between the two. Furthermore, the Protestant cause on the ground was not helped, as it was 'deprived of ritual and sacramental ways of dealing with the activities of such beings'.²⁶ Therefore, the Reformation 'proved unable to eradicate traditional popular concerns about the spirits of the dead' and 'a thick sub-stratum of Protestant popular belief about spirits, ghosts, poltergeists, restless souls, and above all the untimely or "dangerous dead", those for whom the rites of separation had been imperfectly performed', persisted into modern times. Scribner concluded that the officialdom 'could do no more than exercise a passive tolerance of what it could not eradicate'.²⁷

This raises the obvious question concerning the extent to which the Reformation was ultimately a success in shaping sixteenth-century mindsets, one raised by other historians such as Gerald Strauss. Strauss typified the view that the sixteenth-century Reformation was a failure, having 'brought about little or no change in the common religious conscience and the ways in which ordinary men and women conducted their lives'.²⁸ He noted how 'the deep current of popular life' was 'beyond the preacher's appeal and the visitor's power to compel' and how the 'accommodating milieu' which the 'permissive beliefs of medieval Catholicism had absorbed', 'was now abolished'.²⁹

This is very relevant when looking at ghosts. Peter Marshall noted how 'more than any other manifestation of popular religious culture, belief in ghosts challenged the Protestant maxims that the dead have no interest in the affairs of the living, and the living no role to play in securing the happiness of the deceased'.³⁰ Alexandra Walsham, however, in her study on

²⁵ Thomas, *Religion*, 708.

²⁶ R.W. Scribner, 'The Reformation and the "Disenchantment of the World"', in C.S Dixon (ed.), *The German Reformation: The Essential Readings* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 272; Scribner and Johnson (eds), *Popular Religion*, 9.

²⁷ Scribner and Johnson (eds), *Popular Religion*, 10.

²⁸ G. Strauss, *Luther's House of Learning: Indoctrination of the Young in the German Reformation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 299.

²⁹ Strauss, 'Success', 257.

³⁰ Marshall, *Beliefs*, 234.

spirits and angels, has cautioned against seeing the persistence of seeing apparitions as proof of any 'superior vitality of Catholicism as a popular faith' and warned against 'reinforcing the impression that Protestantism achieved little more than a hollow victory'.³¹ This thesis will mediate both views. It will argue against the idea that any sectarian camp won a final and decisive victory over the other in the battle for the hearts and minds of people regarding spirits and ghosts. Instead, a more varied and accommodating folk supernatural embodying elements from various traditions existed, a melange that was usually at odds with the formal Christianities of their societies.

Survivals

Issues concerning the persistence and Protestant appropriation of ghost belief, closely mirror historical debates over the question of 'survivals' and the extent to which pagan models influenced the succeeding Christian supernatural. Many of the themes and actors are the same. We have a *pagani* countryside, entrenched in error and ignorance, the target for the message of a new caste of saints, certain of their righteousness and eager to root out the old gods from their groves. We have the question of whether the ghost that emerged was a pagan/ Catholic 'survival' or 'remnant', or a truly Christian/ Protestant spectre. The crucial question is the extent to which the persistence of motifs and tropes of the supernatural meant a persistence of the heathen or Catholic mindset, or whether, as forms, they were much more malleable and adaptable to the contemporary needs of the people using them. Nancy Caciola, in her own work into medieval spirits, dismissed the idea that ghosts necessarily demonstrated the persistence of a pagan undercurrent of belief in medieval Europe. She acknowledged the debt of older motifs and spirit tropes in the making of a Christian supernatural but warned against imagining that these represented an underground pagan religion which persisted into the medieval period.³² Instead, she stressed the value such stories had and that they 'were simply too useful to reject, for they offered direct, first-

³¹ A. Walsham, 'Invisible Helpers: Angelic Intervention in Post-Reformation England', *Past and Present*, 208:1 (2010), 103.

³² N.M. Caciola, *Afterlives: The Return of the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016), 14-16.

hand evidence for the existence of an afterlife beyond this one'.³³ Rather than a passive transmission of culture, she emphasised the nature of 'long-term cultural survivals as both selective and specific', one where 'what persists is significant and repeated; what withers is deprioritised and neglected'. Cultural survivals were 'consciously and actively chosen', with a continuing relevance for their own times and the communities that used them.³⁴

Bruce Gordon stressed how Protestants needed to create a new vocabulary for the supernatural and colonise a space Catholicism had previously managed.³⁵ Jürgen Beyer too, in his study into angelic apparitions, has noted how stories were assembled from a common bank of supernatural tropes, which involved dipping into 'common knowledge; cheap print; the church; and oral communication'.³⁶ It was possible 'to take a motif from one context and put it in another', with the motifs themselves 'drawn from common knowledge about supernatural beings rather than from fixed tale texts about such beings'. These were then 'adjusted to Lutheran society'.³⁷ Peter Marshall too has emphasised how there was 'a common vocabulary of the supernatural' and that the Mother Leakey haunting in Minehead in 1636 'drew on a widely shared stock of images about ghosts and sets of templates about how to behave in their presence'.³⁸ Some of these tropes were 'suggestive of deep folkloric patterns, equally alien to the theological rationalisations of medieval scholasticism, Tridentine Catholicism, and Reformation Protestantism'.³⁹ The Minehead haunting was 'an amalgam of the malevolent revenant of folk-tradition with more specifically Catholic and Protestant ghost tropes', and considering its date, 'has interesting things to say to us about processes and time-scales of religious change, as well as patterns of social and cultural exchange'.⁴⁰ Belinda Lewis suggested that people 'selectively embraced elements according to their use and

³³ Caciola, *Afterlives*, 7-8.

³⁴ Caciola, *Afterlives*, 15.

³⁵ B. Gordon, 'Malevolent Ghosts and Ministering Angels: Apparitions and Pastoral care in the Swiss Reformation', in B. Gordon and P. Marshall (eds), *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 94.

³⁶ J. Beyer, 'On the Transformation of Apparition Stories in Scandinavia and Germany, c. 1350-1700', *Folklore*, 110 (1999), 43.

³⁷ Beyer, 'Transformation', 45.

³⁸ P. Marshall, 'Old Mother Leakey and the Golden Chain: Context and Meaning in an Early Stuart Haunting', in J. Newton (ed.), *Early Modern Ghosts: Proceedings of the "Early Modern Ghosts" Conference held at St. John's College, Durham on 24th March 2001* (Durham: Centre for Seventeenth-Century Studies, University of Durham, 2002), 98, 101.

³⁹ Marshall, 'Old Mother Leakey', 99.

⁴⁰ Marshall, 'Old Mother Leakey', 102.

relevance'.⁴¹ Jo Bath thought that 'rather than gradually converting to the Church's viewpoint, people seem to have individually absorbed aspects of the Church's teaching and placed them, in a form not fully rationalised, alongside or intermingled with older beliefs'.⁴² This led to ghosts, 'even when they were still thought of as spirits of the dead', being 'tainted with the elements ascribed to their demonic counterparts by the clergy'.⁴³

Just as bells were Protestantised, so were ghosts. Rituals and beliefs which the early Reformation had held deep suspicions towards and had abolished were reintroduced in Lutheranism. These included the churching of women, the consecration of sacred spaces in churches and graveyards and the blessing of pulpits, fonts, organs and bells.⁴⁴ The English church, notably during its Laudian phase, was also intent on re-sacralising space and ritual practices that at times had been perceived as popish.⁴⁵ This thesis will show that ghost stories continued to affirm the sacred space and purity of churches and graveyards and the need to keep these sites free from pollution. Therefore, many traditional supernatural tropes continued across from the medieval period. Likewise, in this thesis ghosts will be shown to affirm the continued importance of correct ritual, most notably involving the proper disposal of the dead.

This thesis follows in the footsteps of those, like Bob Scribner and Alexandra Walsham, who argued against a Protestant disenchantment of the world.⁴⁶ Rather than rejecting 'the notion that supernatural forces intruded into human affairs and effecting a paradigm shift in conceptions of the relationship between the sacred and secular sphere, Protestantism actually served to reinforce the idea of a "sacramental" and "moralised" universe'.⁴⁷ Despite the Reformation presenting itself 'as a deliberate attempt to remove the magical and miraculous elements from religion...its overall effect, was surely to leave the universe

⁴¹ B. Lewis, 'Protestantism, Pragmatism, and Popular Religion: A Case Study of Early Modern Ghosts', in Newton (ed.), *Early Modern Ghosts*, 87.

⁴² J. Bath, "In the Divell's Likeness": Interpretation and Confusion in Popular Ghost Belief', in Newton (ed.), *Early Modern Ghosts*, 76.

⁴³ Bath, "Divell's Likeness", 72.

⁴⁴ K. von Greyerz, *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800*, trans. T. Dunlap (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 34.

⁴⁵ A. Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 264.

⁴⁶ Walsham *Reformation of the Landscape*, 336-7.

⁴⁷ Walsham, *Providence*, 225.

saturated with supernatural forces and moral significance'.⁴⁸ The Devil came much more to the fore for Lutherans, whose outlook was 'apocalyptic and eschatological, rather than desacralizing', while for Calvinists, 'the reformed religion intensified to an even higher degree the cosmic struggle between the divine and diabolical'.⁴⁹

Historians have warned against seeing a radical break between the middle ages and the early modern periods and instead stressed their continuity. This is especially important when we consider ghost belief. Alexandra Walsham has emphasised the continuity between the two periods, citing the 'need to discard the assumption that Protestantism was antipathetic to the basic mental structures of traditional religion', with 'aspects of traditional observance and piety...rehabilitated and maintained in Reformed guise'.⁵⁰ Providentialism 'was one aspect of late medieval religious culture which Reformation doctrine and practical divinity served, in some respects, to stimulate rather than repress'.⁵¹ Prodigies and calamities were 'visible sermons'.⁵² Catholic tales were edited and Protestantised, 'an intermingling and fusion of elements of the old cosmology with aspects of the new', and preaching using the medium of providential anecdotes was the continuation of a medieval tradition.⁵³ We will see the same process with ghosts and apparitions in this thesis, many of which already possessed or were endowed with further providential aspects. Walsham noted how the early modern range of providential signs consisted of 'a mosaic and an amalgam of a cluster of superficially inconsistent intellectual traditions'.⁵⁴ This was certainly true of ghosts and spirit activity as this study will demonstrate.

In this thesis we will encounter many ghostly tropes that existed in the medieval era and carried over into the early modern period, and indeed beyond. Furthermore, some of the great ghost legends of early modern Germany such as the White Ladies of Neuhaus and Brandenburg and the Chimmecke and Hütgin house spirits had their origins in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This study emphasises how these tropes continued and were on occasion tweaked to make them more acceptable in Protestant print. There were clear efforts

⁴⁸ Walsham, *Providence*, 334.

⁴⁹ Scribner, 'Reformation', 269.

⁵⁰ Walsham, *Providence*, 96, 329.

⁵¹ Walsham, *Providence*, 115.

⁵² Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*, 339.

⁵³ Walsham, *Providence*, 93, 96, 104.

⁵⁴ Walsham, *Providence*, 169.

by writers to record stories explicitly Protestant in character, with a supplicating spirit being gradually unmasked as the Devil himself which would then rage impotently against the ministers of the Word. Indeed, such tales played upon the medieval Purgatorial motif of a ghost being seen to transform from foul to fair as it gained the trust of the witness and was purified by the masses and prayers that person sought to free it from its punishments. The Protestant model reversed this, with fair turning to foul as its true nature was revealed. However, these were just part of the picture, plays upon one trope among many others which likewise had their roots in models of haunting that predated the Reformation.

Likewise, a ghost story need not be set in the time of telling but could recount an encounter with a spirit decades or centuries before. These were stories with explicit connection to the past by the nature of their dead subjects. There was an ambivalence in the literary record about such tales. At one level, they could be dismissed more easily as papist relics, written down by nefarious monks. On the other hand, the pedigree and authority of a story could be enhanced by its age and having been recorded by a famous chronicler or writer so long as its themes could be worked into the agenda of the early modern writer quoting it. Though Catholic in sympathy, the English scientist John Beaumont (c.1650-1731) in his defence of spectres against atheism stated:

I may indulge their humour so far, that if only one Person tells a strange story...but if a considerable number of Persons, of several Countries, several Religions, several professions, several ages, and those persons look'd upon to be of great sagacity...I think it a violation of the Law of nature to reject all these relations as fabulous'.⁵⁵

Of course, we must be aware of the reason behind the collection and publication of ghost stories in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century and that by sheer weight alone, their collectors were attempting to prove the universal prevalence and timelessness of such beliefs and tales.

⁵⁵ John Beaumont, *An Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise of Spirits, Apparitions, Witchcrafts, and other Magical Practices. Containing an Account of the Genii or Familiar Spirits, both Good and Bad, that are said to attend Men in this Life; and what Sensible Perceptions some Persons have had of them: (particularly the Author's own Experience for many Years.) Also of Appearances of Spirits after Death; Divine Dreams, Divinations, Second Sighted Persons, &c. Likewise the Power of Witches, and the reality of other Magical Operations, clearly asserted. With a refutation of Dr. Bekker's World Bewitch'd; and other authors that have opposed the Belief of them.* (London, 1705), 307.

Sasha Handley attempted to bridge the English gap in research into ghost beliefs between 1660 and 1800. Focusing largely on cheap print as a medium for propagating ghost stories and the market that was consuming them, she stressed the rise of a ghost in a developing capitalist nation that was increasingly confident in its Protestantism. She asserted that apparitions and their stories in this period 'owed less to the dwindling mental landscapes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries than to the specific religious, social, cultural and economic realities of eighteenth-century England'.⁵⁶ It was a ghost that was relevant for its times, 'restraining the worst extremes of empiricist and materialist thought, and combating the immoral excesses of an increasingly consumer-orientated society'.⁵⁷ For the religious, ghost stories were valuable and lively preaching mediums that appealed to the public in forms they were familiar with. Instead of only demonising Catholicism, they focused on morality. Handley claimed that 'the legitimacy of ghost belief was revived as part of myriad attempts to extinguish painful memories of civil war and republican government'.⁵⁸ One aim was 'to engage more vigorously with persistent themes in lay religion in order to cement the relationship between Protestantism and the people'.⁵⁹ As such, the ghost was increasingly de-confessionalised by writers 'committed to realising a theologically inclusive religious settlement that sought to incorporate disenfranchised brethren into a united Protestant church'.⁶⁰ This de-confessionalisation of ghost belief has been noted in later seventeenth century Britain and Ireland, with the emphasis less on tropes associated with the old popish enemy, and more with spirits targeted at confounding atheism.⁶¹ The other objective was to counter intellectual currents smeared with the tar of atheism. The intention was, 'by citing ghosts as empirical proof of God's continued intervention in the world,' to demonstrate how 'reasonable religion could supplement revelation'.⁶² Meanwhile, the wider public avidly consumed stories of ghosts as figures of justice that exposed evildoing and set wrongs to right.

⁵⁶ Handley, *Visions*, 20.

⁵⁷ Handley, *Visions*, 5.

⁵⁸ Handley, *Visions*, 19.

⁵⁹ Handley, *Visions*, 48.

⁶⁰ Handley, *Visions*, 36.

⁶¹ Handley, *Visions*, 45; P. Marshall, *Mother Leakey and the Bishop: A Ghost Story* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 224; C. Gribben, 'Angels and Demons in Cromwellian and Restoration Ireland: Heresy and the Supernatural', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 76:3 (2013), 389.

⁶² Handley, *Visions*, 47.

Miriam Rieger focused on ghost belief in the heartlands of the German Reformation in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century.⁶³ She rejected Scribner's contention that ghosts were confessionally indifferent in the early modern period.⁶⁴ She emphasised the confessionalised ghost as a key component of Protestant identity throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁶⁵ Furthermore, the ghost had been successfully Protestantised.⁶⁶ Rieger's model follows in many ways the largely English historiography she cited in her introduction. Keith Thomas' 'shibboleth' is clearly present and so is the theme of disenchantment, as a narrative of rise and decline is charted throughout the early modern period. Likewise, we can see Sasha Handley's model of ghost belief as a weapon in the armoury of the Lord, as both a rod of discipline and affirmation of the existence of God before the rising atheist tide. It differs from what Rieger claims is observed in Britain at the same time, where the ghost was de-confessionalised.⁶⁷ Instead, the Lutheran ghost had completely supplanted, in the eyes of clergy and divines, the place of the earlier Catholic spectre.⁶⁸

This thesis does not contradict the core elements of either Handley's or Rieger's conclusions concerning how print ghosts were exploited from the mid-seventeenth century onwards to affirm confessional and societal identities. Similarly, it does not dispute that ghosts were used to condemn moral excesses associated with the growth of capitalism. However, it does stress that the ghosts in the hands of the divines and printers were not indicative of the entire picture. This picture was much more varied and colourful and reflective of both modern and traditional anxieties. It was to be expected that texts penned by Lutheran and English Protestant divines would reflect their specific concerns rather than the spectrum of belief and situations that ghosts could encompass. We encounter a similar process when looking at textual sources for orthodox Catholic ghost belief, both in the later medieval and in the early modern period where the Purgatorial spectre dominated at the expense of all other tropes. The Catholic Church encouraged one model, one which the reformers also pushed when lampooning that faith. Both Catholic and Protestant divines shared the same advantage of

⁶³ M. Rieger, *Der Teufel im Pfarrhaus. Gespenster, Geisterglaube und Besessenheit im Luthertum der Frühen Neuzeit* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2011).

⁶⁴ Rieger, *Teufel*, 279.

⁶⁵ Rieger, *Teufel*, 16, 21, 25.

⁶⁶ Rieger, *Teufel*, 281.

⁶⁷ Rieger, *Teufel*, 85.

⁶⁸ Rieger, *Teufel*, 85.

holding a monopoly at times of the medium in which knowledge was conveyed and preserved, namely the written word and then print. However, it was clear from my research that these models pushed by either Catholic or Protestant clergymen and polemicists did not paint the entire picture. Clearly, certain print genres promoted particular tropes and were largely silent detailing others. Examples of this which we will examine in this thesis are graveyard ghosts which received little attention in the English record but much more in the German archive.

The German record holds a great advantage over the English record with texts such as *Der Höllische Proteus* written and first published by the Lübeck-born writer and historian Erasmus Finx, aka Erasmus Francisci (1627-1694) in Nuremberg in 1690. It comes in at 1117 pages with just over 100 chapters. Each chapter dealt with a certain form of supernatural activity or spectral trope with numerous stories in each section detailing and investigating it. The name itself reflected a Protestant view of the Devil as the hellish Proteus, a pagan god who constantly changes his form. The title charged him as a skilful and adept actor, one that could play a multitude of roles to betray mankind.⁶⁹ He was frequently described as a *Tausendkünstler*, a jack of all trades. The author clearly depicted a top-down supernatural, one overseen by the Devil who in turn was overshadowed by God. Though much of it was working from within the learned tradition, incorporating classical and medieval tales into a corpus of work designed to reveal the Devil in all his spectral forms and activities, it did clearly betray the existence of a multifaceted supernatural, one in which Francisci often found hard to definitively and convincingly isolate the hand of the devil at work in every haunting. Leaving aside the Protestant and anti-atheist polemic of the work, one can easily see this as reflecting a far more complex view of the supernatural than reliance on cheap print genres alone might allow. If one looks from the bottom up, one potentially can see the folkloric view of haunting.

In the English record, we are occasionally reminded of a world of hauntings far beyond what one encounters in either the ghost books of the late seventeenth century or cheap print pamphlets and ballads. A writer in the October edition of *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1732

⁶⁹ Erasmus Francisci, *Der Höllische Proteus /oder Tausendkünstige Versteller / Vermittelst Erzählung Der Vielfältigen Bild-Verwechslungen Erscheinender Gespenster / Werffender Und Poltrender Geister / Gespenstischer Vorzeichen Der Todes-Fälle / Wie Auch Andrer Abentheurlicher Händel / Arglistiger Possen /und Seltsamer Aufzüge Dieses Verdammten Schauspielers / Und / Von Theils Gelehrten / Für Den Menschlichen Leben-Geist Irrig-Angesehenen Betriegers / (Nebst Vorberichtlichem Grund-Beweis Der Gewißheit / Daß Es Würcklich Gespenster Gebe) Abgebildet Durch Erasmum Francisci / Hochgräfl. Hohenloh-Langenburgischen Raht* (Nuremberg, 1690).

condemned what he saw as the process of how ghost belief was inculcated in the popular mindset. What is of interest is again the large number of tropes and spectres mentioned as well as the different genres and mediums that ghosts existed in. It is worth quoting in full:

The cheat is begun with Nurses with stories of bugbears, etc from whence we are gradually led to listen to the traditionary Accounts of local Ghosts, which like the Genii of the Ancients, have been reported to haunt certain Family Seats, and Cities famous for their Antiquity and Decays. Of this sort are the Apparitions at Verulam, Silchester, Reculver, and Rochester, the Daemon of Tidworth, the Black Dog of Winchester and the Barguest of York. Hence also suburban ghosts rais'd by petty Printers and Pamphleteers consequent to their halfpenny bloody Murders. The story of Madam Veal has been of singular use to the Editors of Drelincourt on Death. There are many others which proceed from Trick and Design; as when a Spectre is trumped up to bring a hard mouth'd Malefactor to Confession; or to sink the Rents of a House, which an ousted Tenant has a Mind to retake; and the like. If our Reason sets us above these low and vulgar Appearances, yet when we read of the Ghost of Sir George Villiers, the Piper of Hammell, the Daemon of Moscow, or the German Colonel, mentioned by Ponti, and see the names of Clarendon, Boyle, etc to these Accounts, we find Reason for our Credulity, 'till at last we are convinc'd by a whole conclave of Ghosts met in the works of Glanvil and Moreton.⁷⁰

This text emphasised the importance of print ghosts as well as many others, clearly in the oral realm, trace of which no longer survives in the early modern record but still exists in later folklore. Hauntings associated with certain locations were also stressed. We can see that certain groups exploited particular tropes for their own purposes, whether they be nurses, pamphleteers or writers of pious tracts on death as well as unscrupulous tenants. The Catholic polemicist Noel Taillepied (1540-1589) mentioning the stories popular with those disciplining children in Catholic France, listed the Phantom monk of Paris 'with the big bushy beard' alongside the Bogeyman and Shuck, the Black Shag.⁷¹ An anonymous text printed in London in 1673 entitled *A Magical Vision* and quoted in full at the start of this thesis also mentioned a host of supernatural tropes, many of them associated with ghosts, occurring across the landscape and rarely found in contemporary print which focused more on spirits associated with murder and justice as well as poltergeists.⁷²

⁷⁰ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 2:10 (1732), 1001-2.

⁷¹ Taillepied, *Treatise*, 32.

⁷² Anon, *Magical Vision*, 14-21.

Ghosts might most often have been the apparitions of the recent dead but that did not mean that ghost stories per se needed to share the same recency. Just because a story was old certainly did not mean that it was no longer told. Throughout the early modern record, we constantly encounter condemnations of ghosts as concepts that one's grandparents would have believed in or told but which no longer would be accepted as true at the time of writing. Likewise, we often read stories the author claims happened in his youth or that he heard when young from his elders as well as peers. Death culture, of which ghost stories are certainly a part, is notoriously conservative. We should not forget that ghost stories have a remarkable longevity in that the tellers most frequently ridiculed (after Catholic priests naturally) were the old who recounted these tales to children on their knees. We must wonder when those tellers had heard their own original versions of these stories and if they too had listened to them beside their grandmothers' hearths. This would explain with some justification the two frequent assumptions by writers that ghosts were both papist and linked to the old. Of course, Catholicism was synonymous both as cause and effect of ignorance in the wider population according to the contemporary learned Protestant mindset.

However, this should be qualified by noting that oral tales would not necessarily remain frozen entirely in the tropes and beliefs of the past but could adapt and be rebranded with the incorporation of more biblical and Protestant motifs relating to spirits and told accordingly. Many of these could come from print. This would emphasise gradual change, bit by bit, over a sudden upturning of traditional tales and ghost beliefs. Likewise, one must consider the tellers, audiences and orality of such tales. Unlike print stories, the stage and cast for hauntings would most likely be set in the immediate locality of the parish with tales stressing its bounds by defending the purity of its sacred spaces while defining evil places and the memory of such people within it.

Belief and Source Analysis

Ghosts can be real. People can be convinced that they have experienced the extraordinary, something they cannot fathom except for recourse to a supernatural explanation. Many of our sources claim a direct first-hand encounter with a spirit. However, for almost all our sources, what we have are legends and tales mediated through second or third hand

accounts, traditionary stories which reflect contemporary mentalities. A person may have claimed that the event was real and happened to them, but the vast majority of people who interacted with the account at the time, and later, did so in tale form. The folklorist Linda Dégh noted how 'as far as legends are concerned, it is irrelevant whether they are true...the truth of a story neither qualifies nor disqualifies it as a legend'.⁷³ Stories don't necessarily reconstruct actualities, but they certainly reflect contemporary mentalities among the learned and non-learned. It is through stories and parables that people formulate and work out their beliefs rather than just theory.⁷⁴ David Hufford stated that

we should see legends not as "texts" or as "beliefs" but as processes, as ways of naming otherwise 'uncanny' or threatening elements of social experiences...a legend is a way of territorialising a poorly defined cultural anxiety by "naming" it or reducing it to "tellable" or quantifiable form.⁷⁵

What differentiates a study of the sources for contemporary ghost and witchcraft beliefs is that whereas the former were overwhelmingly tales and were recognised as such, or happened to a solitary individual, the latter invariably involved a larger group of people and the agents of the state caught up in the hysteria of an event. Telling ghost stories or indeed believing in them was not a matter for civil prosecution by the authorities. This contrasts with the court records, depositions and legal mechanisms we find for witchcraft. Whereas witchcraft was a danger whose actors could be identified, tried and punished, ghosts faced less repression as they were not seen as embodying the same danger. Evidently, it depended on the teller at times. Jesuit priests caught in Protestant lands peddling them would suffer a harsher penalty. Likewise, if one sought to propitiate or treat with the spirits of the dead, the punishment would potentially be much worse. However, when polemicists and writers criticised ghost belief, they dismissed it as symptomatic of the long-lasting legacy of popery among the ignorant and weak of mind. They were silly tales for the most part which confirmed the ignorant in their intellectual and moral squalor and the learned and Godly in their superiority and Election, both mental and spiritual.

⁷³ L. Dégh, *Legend and Belief* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001), 12.

⁷⁴ D. J. Hufford, 'An Experience-Centered Approach to Hauntings', in J. Houran and R. Lange (eds), *Hauntings and Poltergeists: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2001), 20.

⁷⁵ B. Ellis, *Lucifer Ascending: The Occult in Folklore and Popular Culture* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2004), 18.

This thesis holds that ghost stories were always popular in the early modern period. They may have enjoyed a more prominent place in English print after the 1650s but this should not detract from their constant presence in the contemporary oral tradition. They were popular among both young and old and between the sexes and were not restricted to the poor or ignorant. No subject pleased the minister Randall Hutchins (1567-1603) more than spectres and the diarist Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) recounted several evenings of such entertainment in the company of his peers.⁷⁶ Vance Randolph in his study into early twentieth-century folklore in the Ozarks in Missouri and Arkansas noted how 'it was a recognised form of social entertainment, especially favoured by people who did not hold with dancing or card playing'.⁷⁷ This observation could be valid for the early modern period too considering the moral content of these tales.

One should be careful with belief and how we can measure it in the past. Late seventeenth-century scholars described a chain of connection, one that ran the whole way through from ghosts and petty demons to God Himself. It is the remit of theologians to ascribe order to the universe, in the same manner a scientist might, with laws and principles. Belief, on the other hand, is varied. J.C. Schmitt described it as 'a never completed activity, one that is precarious, always questioned and inseparable from recurrences of doubt. There is nothing less fixed and less assured than this activity of believing'.⁷⁸ Douglas J. Davies noted how beliefs were held 'in cluster-form rather than in a systematic scheme', as 'bundles' which 'may even appear contradictory if spelled out and analysed logically'.⁷⁹ He pointed out that 'logical contradiction need not necessarily worry individuals whose varied views are drawn on for different purposes and in different contexts'.⁸⁰ Alexandra Walsham emphasised how 'early modern people from all rungs on the social ladder had the capacity to inhabit several mental worlds simultaneously'.⁸¹ It was a point too that Chris Marsh stressed in relation to the transformation of England into a Protestant country in the sixteenth century. People 'often seem to have been adept at living with contradictions', holding onto 'aspects of Catholic belief

⁷⁶ Davies, *Haunted*, 106; Samuel Pepys, *The Shorter Pepys: Selected and edited by Robert Latham* (London: Penguin, 1993), 126, 287, 451, 655, 1000-1.

⁷⁷ V. Randolph, *Ozark Magic and Folklore* (New York, NY: Dover, 1964), 211.

⁷⁸ J.C. Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages: The Living and the Dead in Medieval Society*, trans. T.L. Fagan (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 7.

⁷⁹ D.J. Davies, *Death, Ritual and Belief* (London: Cassell, 1997), 151.

⁸⁰ Davies, *Death*, 151.

⁸¹ Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*, 374-5.

and practice, while simultaneously learning to think of themselves as Protestant'.⁸² Furthermore, beliefs may vary within a single community depending on a variety of factors ranging from age, gender, education, subculture and occupation, amongst many others. Balthasar Bekker, the Dutch Calvinist theologian famous for his criticism of a Protestantism obsessed with the devil, noted that even though there were 'none so credulous as the Vulgar', that there was 'a very considerable difference to be seen in their Opinions, some believing almost everything, and others almost nothing at all'.⁸³

Though the polemical message behind most of the texts and tales we will examine is clear, we are not sure how people reacted to individual stories and their moral commentary, and indeed whether they considered them absurd, entertaining, allegorical or true.⁸⁴ A specific account may be dismissed as untrue but elements within it can be related to a person's own experience and may act as a prompt for another tale, one the speaker will claim is true. Linda Dégh noted that 'disputability is not only a feature of the legend, it is its very essence, its *raison d'être*, its goal'.⁸⁵ For her, it was 'not the positive declaration of belief that makes a legend a legend but rather the debate of participants considering the legend's believability'.⁸⁶ Patrick Mullen had reached a similar conclusion, observing how 'the conflict among affirmation, doubt, and denial seems central to the context of legend expression'.⁸⁷ Stories needed not only narrators but also audiences composed of both believers and doubters.⁸⁸

Keith Thomas, David Lederer, Theo Brown, Owen Davies and Francis Young, among others, have employed sources from later nineteenth-century literary and folklore collections to supplement the sparse surviving material for the early modern period. Johannes Dillinger in his cultural history of magical treasure hunting justified the use of such sources, stating that 'the pool of motifs seems to have remained largely stable' between the early modern period

⁸² C. Marsh, *Popular Religion in Sixteenth Century England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 11.

⁸³ Balthasar Bekker, *The World Bewitch'd, or, An Examination of the Common Opinions concerning Spirits their Nature, Power, Administration and Operations, as also the Effects Men are able to produce by their Communication: Divided into IV parts / by Balthazar Bekker; Vol. I translated from a French copy, approved of and subscribed by the Author's own Hand* (London, 1695), 224.

⁸⁴ Walsham, *Providence*, 39, 106.

⁸⁵ Dégh, *Legend*, 3.

⁸⁶ Dégh, *Legend*, 311.

⁸⁷ P.B. Mullen, *I heard the Old Fishermen Say: Folklore of the Texas Gulf Coast* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1988), 27.

⁸⁸ Dégh, *Legend*, 218.

and nineteenth century.⁸⁹ Though tempting, I will not do the same. Certain German nineteenth-century collections, especially those of Johann Georg Theodor Grässe (1814-1885) and Johann August Ernst Köhler (1829-1903), have proven extremely useful for me. Many of their tales are directly referenced to surviving sixteenth to early eighteenth-century print sources which can then be chased up in the original.⁹⁰ However, unless there is an early modern surviving textual source for the story, I have avoided using it. I have encountered tales which do obviously suggest direct transmission from an earlier period, but in lieu of the expertise to distinguish them, or a direct reference back to an earlier source which I then did exploit, they have been excluded from this study. The risk that they have been subject to later contamination is too great, as we can only source the stories to the point when they were collected. We must also be aware that we are largely dealing with literary tales rather than a genuine folklore for the period. This was one criticism levelled at the Brothers Grimm, whose nineteenth-century collections masqueraded as folklore but were sourced often from literary texts.⁹¹

The English folklorist Gillian Bennett conducted research into both early modern and more contemporary ghost beliefs. Her study into the supernatural beliefs of widows in Gatley, Manchester, in the late twentieth century, revealed that her group of widows often saw, talked to or sensed the presence of their dead partner. For Bennett, there was a ‘feeling of the “presence” of the dead around them and a strong belief that these presences could witness and if necessary intervene in, the lives of descendants and survivors’. The dead husband was perceived to still have a guiding influence in their lives which was protective and advisory in nature.⁹² This contrasted to what they understood as the legendary ghost. ‘Things’ squatting in haunted houses or spirits sought by delving were either nonsense or evil.⁹³ Spirits centred on a place were usually evil and purposeless in manifestation in contrast to ‘people

⁸⁹ J. Dillinger, *Magical Treasure Hunting in Europe and North America* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 6-7.

⁹⁰ Johann Georg Theodor Grässe, *Sagenbuch des Preußischen Staats* (Glogau: 1868/71); Johann Georg Theodor Grässe, *Der Sagenschatz des Königsreichs Sachsen* (Dresden: 1874); Josef Virgil Grohmann, *Sagen-Buch von Böhmen und Mähren* (Berlin, 1925); Johann August Ernst Köhler, *Sagenbuch des Erzgebirges* (Schwarzenberg: 1886).

⁹¹ Beyer, ‘Transformation’, 39.

⁹² G. Bennett, *Traditions of Belief: Women, Folklore and the Supernatural Today* (London: Penguin, 1987), 65-6.

⁹³ G. Bennett, ‘Heavenly Protection and Family Unity: The Concept of the Revenant among Elderly, Urban Women’, *Folklore*, 96:1 (1985), 89.

centred and purposeful manifestations'.⁹⁴ Bennett suggested that this showed the existence of a hidden tradition of spirit belief among elderly women.⁹⁵ For her, people looked for 'real' ghosts in the wrong place and 'rather than see them in literary, traditional tropes, we see them at times of bereavement instead'.⁹⁶ A covert tradition existed alongside the overt beliefs of a community, one where 'bare, unstructured experience' was 'meditated by traditional expectations into accounts of the comforting presence of the good dead'.⁹⁷

Judith Devlin, in her research into nineteenth-century French peasant preternatural and supernatural beliefs, noted that 'most anecdotes about sightings of ghosts-as opposed to legends-were told by people who claimed to have seen friends, relatives or neighbours'.⁹⁸ She observed a difference between 'the legendary and religious' stories and 'anecdotal and personal' tales of the returning dead.⁹⁹ D.J. Davis observed the same, noting how 'the very idea of a ghost enshrines a degree of impersonality and distance, whereas a sense of the presence of a dead relative is most often interpreted in a distinctly personal way'.¹⁰⁰ Owen Davies stressed the need to be aware of this for the past.¹⁰¹

From the above, two points which have influenced the direction of my thesis are clear. The first is that ghost stories tied to places were generally legendary. Rather than reflecting actual experience of perceived encounters with the dead, they were stories about place, embodying fears and anxieties of those locations, upon which group moralities were projected. These ghosts in these places are the focus of the first chapter of my work. My research here will largely concentrate on a legendary landscape and the ghosts that haunted it. I will study the legendary haunted house, but the haunted bedroom and hearth are places I shall skirt. They deserve their own special attention, one I cannot attempt here. However, in my chapter on war, I will look at accounts of more personal encounters with spirits, occurring at times of extreme stress and crisis. I hope to discover whether the intensely personal spirits mentioned by Bennett and Devlin and cited as evidence for a more hidden tradition alongside legendary

⁹⁴ G. Bennett, *"Alas Poor Ghost!": Traditions of Belief in Story & Discourse* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1999), 41.

⁹⁵ Bennett, 'Heavenly Protection', 89.

⁹⁶ Bennett, 'Heavenly Protection', 89.

⁹⁷ Bennett, 'Heavenly Protection', 96.

⁹⁸ J. Devlin, *The Superstitious Mind: French Peasants and the Supernatural in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 90.

⁹⁹ Devlin, *Superstitious Mind*, 92.

¹⁰⁰ Davies, *Death, Ritual*, 155.

¹⁰¹ Davies, *Haunted*, 3.

tales of ghosts and spirits, existed or not in the early modern period. The obvious complicating factor is the degree to which such a tradition would be visible in the record, as opposed to having existed purely at an oral level.

This study looks at ghosts of place. We must stress that ghost belief and legends were as much part of a town or cityscape as they were of a rural landscape. The buildings and streets were as every bit haunted to the people who lived and grew up there and knew the local lore as the countryside was. Though contemporary invective and polemic often attempted to relocate ghost seeing and belief to the rural hinterlands and figure it as a rustic vice, one no longer in tune with urban Protestant Enlightened sensibilities, we should be more circumspect in our approach. The cities themselves attracted many rural migrants from the provinces and their economies were interconnected. I acknowledge the potential for ghost stories to reflect anxieties about the invasion of modern spaces by aspects of society deemed primitive, regressive and foreign. However, we should not allow this to create the false impression that this intruded onto a *tabula rasa* of place freed entirely from the memory of haunting.

In the English and German record, I found numerous examples of ghostly apparitions and visitations in towns and cities. Graveyards and churches were magnets for ghost legends as we shall see. They often lay at the centre of a community even though there was a particular effort in Germany to relocate the former in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the outskirts of settlements. Arguably the most famous German ghost, the White Lady of the House of Hohenzollern, most usually haunted the apartments of the Elector of Brandenburg in the heart of Berlin itself. Sentries and watchmen in the great cities of London, Magdeburg and Prague among many other places reported encountering apparitions. Though the Wild Hunt would rage through the forests at night, phantom monks, ghostly processions and the Devil himself would stalk the urban streets. The city of Dresden was haunted by a monk who would walk its lanes as well as its castle. There was the account of a Hackney coachman in London picking up a phantom hitch-hiker who transformed into a raging bear with flaming eyes as he set him down at his destination.¹⁰² Though the great English ghost-books of Glanvill

¹⁰² Anon, *A Strange, True, and Dreadful Relation, of the Devils appearing to Thomas Cox a Hackney-Coach-Man who lives in Cradle-Alley in Baldwins-Gardens. First, in the Habit of a Gentleman with a Roll of Parchment in his Hand, and then in the Shape of a Bear, which afterwards vanish'd away in a Flash of Fire, at Eight of the Clock on Friday night, October the 31th. 1684* (London, 1684).

and Bovet often dealt with stories of spirits in the provinces, particularly in the south-west of the country, the nascent print industry published broadsheets and chapbooks dealing with ghosts and apparitions right in the heart of the capital near the presses.¹⁰³ A notable example of this was the spectre of a former midwife Mrs Adkins of Rotten Row in Holborn, which appeared in 1679 confessing to the murder of numerous bastard children and the burial of their bones under her hearth.¹⁰⁴ Some of these were recurrent hauntings, happening again and again in the same place. Others were one-off events. However, for these we must remember that a single supernatural incident could then transform that place into a site forever haunted in popular memory.

We must be cautious when considering our source material. There is a big question concerning the extent to which the ghosts within the surviving sources correspond to popular belief and tropes. A cunning man in sixteenth-century Franconia, on the matter of his magic, warned a shepherd to 'say nothing to the clergyman'.¹⁰⁵ Meanwhile, Johann Beer, in his *German Winter Nights* (1682), warned of stories 'that are filled with fabricated and boastful deeds that can't be imitated and in reality have taken place only in the minds of their hack authors...therefore, it is much more necessary to write things that can serve us as a warning for our future life'.¹⁰⁶

R.C. Finucane noted how medieval clerical tales did not necessarily directly reflect popular belief on the subject but still had to work around 'widely accepted attitudes, expectations and beliefs' to achieve their purpose.¹⁰⁷ Sasha Handley, citing Bourdieu, noted a similar observation for seventeenth and eighteenth-century cheap print ghosts. She stated, 'in so far

¹⁰³ Handley, *Visions*, 71-3.

¹⁰⁴ Anon, *Great News from Middle-Row in Holbourn, or, A True Relation of a Dreadful Ghost which appeared in the Shape of one Mrs. Adkins to Several Persons, but especially to a Maid-Servant at the Adam and Eve, all in a Flame of Fire on Tuesday-Night last, being the 16th of this Instant March, 1679* (London, 1680); Anon, *A New BALLAD of The Midwives Ghost: Who appeared to several People in the House where she formerly lived in Rotten-Row in Holbourn, London, who were all afraid to speak unto her; but she growing very Impetuous, on the 16th of this Instant March, 1680, declarred her mind to the Maid of the said House, who with an Unanimous Spirit adhered to her, and afterwards told it to her Mistris, how that if they took up two Tiles by the Fire-side, they should find the Bones of Bastard-Children that the said Midwife had 15 years ago Murthered, and that she desires that her Kinswoman Mary should see them decently Buried; which accordingly they did, and found it as the Maid had said. The Bones are to be seen at the Cheshire-Cheese in the said place at this very time, for the Satisfaction of those that believes not this Relation* (London, 1680).

¹⁰⁵ Dixon, 'Popular Beliefs', 127.

¹⁰⁶ Johann Beer, *German Winter Nights: Translated by John Russell with an Introduction by James Hardin* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1998), 122.

¹⁰⁷ R.C. Finucane, *Appearances of the Dead: A Cultural History of Ghosts* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1984), 59-60.

as these texts were intended for commercial success, they had to connect with the expectations and tastes of readers rather than simply reflecting the views of an isolated and culturally dissonant individual'.¹⁰⁸ This was echoed by Owen Davies who warned that 'to depart too far from popular preconceptions was to risk failure in attempting to recreate the haunted experience'. At the same time, he emphasised the reciprocity of influence between these print depictions and wider public belief which though difficult to prise apart, mutually reinforced each other.¹⁰⁹

The extent to which the stories found in the collections of Joseph Glanvill, Richard Bovet, Richard Baxter, George Sinclair and Thomas Bromhall represented popular belief and tropes in mid to late seventeenth-century England has also been questioned. Gillian Bennett cautioned against accepting their work as genuine records of folkloric beliefs. She compared their aims and methods unfavourably to those a folklorist might have today. These writers were motivated by 'religious zeal and the maintenance of the cultural status quo and their material was therefore no doubt selected to serve those purposes'. Furthermore, those who provided the stories were 'self-selected informants...from a limited group of educated, upper-class people known to the collectors', hardly representative of the wider population. Not only could they have presented an inaccurate picture of ghost beliefs for their time of writing, namely the late seventeenth century, but by their incorporation into later eighteenth-century works such as Francis Grose or Henry Bourne, they could skew the entire ghostlore for the pre-industrial era.¹¹⁰ This warning could apply equally for the German record, with writers such as Erasmus Francisci, Peter Goldschmidt and Otto von Graben zum Stein among others, totally foiling any chance to reconstruct actual belief. The same observation was made by Timothy Chesters for ghost belief in sixteenth-century France when he warned that learned writers were 'keen to set their own discussions of supernatural topics apart from the fireside "fables" or "bourdes" (tall tales) of the peasant population'.¹¹¹

I prefer to follow the approach recommended by Jo Bath and John Newton. They said that Glanvill and others could be used as 'representing authentic ghostlore', but with caution.

¹⁰⁸ Handley, *Visions*, 11.

¹⁰⁹ Davies, *Haunted*, 216.

¹¹⁰ G. Bennett, 'Ghost and Witch in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Folklore*, 97:1 (1986), 11.

¹¹¹ T. Chesters, *Ghost Stories in Late Renaissance France: Walking by Night* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 7.

Though selective in their material, ‘the tenor of belief may well have been close to that found in the folk belief of the period; indeed, it may have needed to be in order to have communicated with its intended audience and achieved its purpose’.¹¹² Meanwhile, antiquarians such as John Aubrey (1626-1697) may prove more reliable. He and others had potentially fewer ideological and religious axes to grind, though saying that, his methods of collection and presentation of tales hardly match the rigorous standards demanded from today’s folklorists. In Germany, the stories collected by the minister and historian of the Erz region Christian Lehmann (1611-1688) were also remarkable for their folkloric colour and their synthesis of Catholic and Protestant motifs.

We are clearly at a disadvantage attempting to reconstruct the authentic folkloric pattern of tales and beliefs surrounding ghosts for the early modern period. The literary sources constantly accuse women, children, the old and ignorant for being among those most likely to see ghosts or tells stories about them yet we have almost no genuine tales or memorates from these groups. We have a few gems from certain contemporary autobiographies. The Jewish widow Glückel of Hameln (1646-1724) wrote a famous memoir in which she described how the corpse of a woman close to her was robbed of its shroud and appeared in a dream to reveal this. As a new shroud was being quickly sewn, a servant girl urged the women involved to hurry up, crying out in fear ‘Can’t you see her sitting among you’?¹¹³ The Breslau-born pastor Adam Bernd (1676-1748) famous for his autobiography, noted several fascinating recollections from his childhood. He related how he was often terrified by dreams of supernatural creatures and how, while the rest of his family were working in the fields and he was left alone to guard the house, he preferred to stand outside in the cold as he was too afraid of the bogeymen that might lurk inside.¹¹⁴ Unfortunately, these are overwhelmingly the exception rather than the rule. Joseph Glanvill, commenting on the number and variety of supernatural tales, noted how ‘there are ten thousand silly lying stories of witchcraft and

¹¹² J. Bath and J. Newton, ‘Sensible Proof of Spirits’: Ghost Belief during the Later-Seventeenth Century’, *Folklore*, 117:1 (2006), 9.

¹¹³ Glückel of Hameln, *The Memoirs of Glückel of Hameln*, trans. by M. Lowenthal (New York: Schocken Books, 1977), 12-3.

¹¹⁴ Adam Bernd, *M. Adam Bernds, Evangel. Pred. Eigene Lebens-Beschreibung: Samt einer Aufrichtigen Entdeckung, und deutlichen Beschreibung einer der grösten, obwol großen Theils noch unbekannten Leibes- und Gemüths-Plage, Welche Gott zuweilen über die Welt-Kinder, und auch wohl über seine eigene Kinder verhänget; Den Unwissenden zum Unterricht, Den Gelehrten zu weiterm Nachdencken, Den Sündern zum Schrecken, und Den Betrübten, und Angefochtenen zum Troste.* (Leipzig, 1738), 19-20, 62, 64-5.

Apparitions among the vulgar'.¹¹⁵ Sadly for us, he deemed them unworthy to copy down, instead preferring the reports of gentlemen and ladies rather than the actual tales of those supposedly most prone to ghost-seeing.

There is also the matter of discernment of spirits which was at the core of Reformation debates. Ghosts, spirits, angels, demons, saints and fairies occupied the same contested ground and often appeared or manifested themselves in similar ways.¹¹⁶ Poltergeist activity was an example of one such trope that all these spirits could share. It should be thought of as more an activity rather than a specific entity. In Lutheran texts, angels often assumed many of the helpful roles the Catholic saints once performed.¹¹⁷ Indeed, Jürgen Beyer suggested that this even extended to angels standing in for helpful fairies.¹¹⁸ Alexandra Walsham looked at tales of angels appearing to humans and divided them into five categories. These included 'avenging angels' who warned of war and judgement, angels that delivered 'a sentence against flagrant sinners', those that appeared 'to obscure individuals' to entrust them with a task of 'admonishing their wicked communities', as 'agents of benevolent deliverance' and finally those that healed.¹¹⁹ As we shall see, ghosts too fulfilled all these roles.

Our perception of hauntings could be skewed by newsworthy and noisy spirits with a clear narrative development, in contrast to silent and apparently purposeless ghosts which haunted local settings. Hysteria can also play a role in hauntings dominated by group sightings or poltergeist activity. Not only might we miss the authentic legendary ghosts of place, but we might also miss the personal ghosts of grief and loss that haunted the early modern psyche. Jeannie Banks Thomas, in a study into contemporary American ghosts, noted how the infamous example of the Amityville haunting (1975-76) skewed people's perceptions of the supernatural. Whereas 'Hollywood's supernatural is often hyperbolic; the folk supernatural is understated in comparison'.¹²⁰ We can see this in the early modern record with chapbooks with titles such as 'Strange Newes'. Evidently, these reports described extraordinary events

¹¹⁵ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 228.

¹¹⁶ Davies, *Haunted*, 13; A. Walsham, 'Invisible Helpers', 118-9.

¹¹⁷ J. Beyer, 'Transformation', 43.

¹¹⁸ J. Beyer, 'A Lübeck Prophet in Local and Lutheran Context', in Scribner and Johnson (eds), *Popular Religion*, 173-4.

¹¹⁹ Walsham, 'Invisible Helpers', 87-91, 91-2, 92-4, 94-6, 96-9.

¹²⁰ J.B. Thomas, 'The Usefulness of Ghost Stories', in E. Goldstein, S.A. Grider and J.B. Thomas (eds), *Haunting Experiences: Ghosts in Contemporary Folklore* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2007), 34.

outside the norm of experience and were thus newsworthy. We must be careful of this bias of the spectacular.

We should be aware that theologians had no monopoly on ghosts and that there were other ways of interpreting these spirits.¹²¹ Timothy Chesters in his study into early modern French ghost belief, noted how the confessional focus of the theologians risked 'viewing in monochrome a picture cast in many shades' and that though 'theology remained a privileged framework within which to interpret the figure of the ghost, it was only one framework', and that 'other contexts, too, had begun to stake their claim'.¹²² A purely theological reading of ghosts raises the risk that we read these texts as their authors intended, at the time of writing, rather than as they were actually read and understood by their changing audiences over the period. Owen Davies warned that seventeenth-century pamphlet literature could mislead us 'with a demonic conception of ghosts that did not reflect popular beliefs'.¹²³ We hesitate at accepting learned demonological tropes of the witches' pact, sabbat, and diabolism as representative of popular beliefs. The same caution must be applied with ghosts, especially when the demonic aspect is stressed. We should also remember that people bought, read, told and listened to ghost stories not merely to prove theological points or discern the spirit, but for pleasure and a good scare.

We can't restrict ourselves to the study of either one writer or collection, or one genre of writing or type of source if we want to fully understand contemporary ghost belief. Different tropes of ghosts appear in different genres, different spirits in different places. We cannot assume that one trope of ghost fits all and that this spirit was indicative of the age. This thesis will show that the early modern supernatural was much richer and cannot be tied down to one spirit alone. At the same time, we should look more closely at the details of the stories found in religious collections. I will contend that by a deeper reading of these stories, we can see more folkloric elements, notably in those concerning place and war, the focus of this study.

¹²¹ Chesters, *Ghost Stories*, 107.

¹²² Chesters, *Ghost Stories*, 116.

¹²³ Davies, *Haunted*, 38.

Why Place?

Landscape and place are closely intertwined with ghost belief and legends. Place was not the sole factor in any haunting, but it was certainly one of its most preeminent. As we shall see in this thesis, there were many famous tales of hauntings linked to certain churches, graveyards, bridges, forests, battlefields, inns, country houses and castles.

Place has long been recognised as vital in understanding hauntings in other cultures and times and an extensive body of literature, both academic and more popular, reflects this interest. My own research has been heavily influenced by such studies linking spirits to place and memory.¹²⁴ However, despite being so critical to ghost belief, there have been few formal comprehensive studies within the early modern historical context in either English or German. The most well-known and informative in English was that conducted by the folklorist Theo Brown in 1979, though it was one heavily dependent on nineteenth-century folkloric accounts.¹²⁵ Owen Davies did include a chapter on the geography of haunting in a 2007 monograph on ghosts though again it was not restricted to the early modern period.¹²⁶ Meanwhile, Claude Lecouteux has written numerous works on spirits of place, linking the medieval and early modern continental literary traditions.¹²⁷ His work is imaginative, thought-

¹²⁴ C.E. Boyd and C. Thrush (eds), *Phantom Past, Indigenous Presence: Native Ghosts in North American Culture and History* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2011); Dégh, *Legend*; Devlin, *Superstitious Mind*; B. Ellis, *Aliens, Ghosts and Cults: Legends We Live* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2001); H.R. Ellis, *The Road to Hel: A Study of the Conception of the Dead in Old Norse Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943); Goldstein, Grider and Thomas, *Haunting Experiences*; T. Gunnell, 'Legends and Landscape in the Nordic Countries', *Cultural and Social History*, 6:3 (2009), 305-322; C. Lipman, *Co-habiting with Ghosts: Knowledge, Experience, Belief and the Domestic Uncanny* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014); M.C. Poo (ed.), *Rethinking Ghosts in World Religions* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); J. Richardson, *Possessions: The History and Uses of Haunting in the Hudson Valley* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); J.B. Thomas (ed.), *Putting the Supernatural in Its Place: Folklore, the Hypermodern, and the Ethereal* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2015).

¹²⁵ T. Brown, *The Fate of the Dead: A Study in Folk-Eschatology in the West Country after the Reformation* (Ipswich: Brewer, 1979).

¹²⁶ Davies, *Haunted*, 45-64.

¹²⁷ C. Lecouteux, *Demons and Spirits of the Land: Ancestral Lore and Practices*, trans. J.E. Graham (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2015); *Encyclopedia of Norse and Germanic Folklore, Mythology, and Magic*, trans. J.E. Graham (Rochester, VT: Hidden Traditions, 2016); *Phantom Armies of the Night: The Wild Hunt and the Ghostly Processions of the Undead*, trans. J.E. Graham (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2011); *The Return of the Dead: Ghosts, Ancestors, and the Transparent Veil of the Pagan Mind*, trans. J.E. Graham (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2009); *The Secret History of Poltergeists and Haunted Houses: From Pagan Folklore to Modern Manifestations*, trans. J.E. Graham (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2007); *The Secret History of Vampires: Their Multiple Forms and Hidden Purposes*, trans. J.E. Graham (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2010); *The Tradition of Household Spirits: Ancestral Lore and Practices*, trans. J.E. Graham (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2013).

provoking and well-grounded in an impressive knowledge of his sources and subject matter. However, most of his sources derive from the formal literary canon and could be supplemented by a deeper foray into cheap print. They also stress the roots and historic pedigree of tropes, suggestive of a clear descent from earlier, pagan beliefs rather than engage more forcefully with the contemporary relevance of these tales and beliefs in the early modern period itself. My study will attempt to redress this.

Place cannot be subtracted from the telling of a story, nor usually the spirit from the site of its haunting. It is the canvas on which our tale is set, the stage on which the drama is played. By examining ghosts in the environment and place their legends are located, it gives us a better understanding of what they were and why they were there, as opposed to how theologians may have narrowly defined and discerned them. Nancy Caciola in her study into late medieval ghosts in the Alps and Italy noted how for local communities 'the unseen world reflected the seen world' and that it was 'dominated by dead saints and wandering ghosts rather than by angels or demons'.¹²⁸ It was a supernatural that served and reflected local needs rather than one constructed by theologians. This thesis follows this line of thinking. By looking at locations and understanding how early modern people understood them as liminal nodes between the worlds of men and spirits reflecting group and moral identities, we will be much closer to the folkloric understanding of hauntings. The elites and learned construed ghosts in the written and printed text. I will stress that popular understandings relied much more on an intimate connection between tale, place and experience.

An idea that runs through this thesis is that the overarching supernatural cosmologies of theologians and demonologists did not necessarily fit the worldview of the people. Likewise, people may possess contradictory views regarding the supernatural. They might dismiss the existence of spirits but, depending on the situation and place, be willing to consider them. The anti-atheist taunt, daring the unbeliever to cross a churchyard at night, is one example of this. One might not believe in ghosts, but the unease one experiences is a reminder why this place is important in society, or why this place is dangerous.

The memory of a place was vital for discerning a spirit at the popular level. According to the Swiss theologian Ludwig Lavater's categorisation of classical spirits, it was evident that place

¹²⁸ N. Caciola, 'Spirits seeking Bodies: Death, Possession and Communal Memory in the Middle Ages', in Gordon and Marshall (eds), *Place*, 67, 79.

was a critical factor in ascertaining the identity of certain entities.¹²⁹ Place and localisation are vital components of legends.¹³⁰ The folklorist Terry Gunnell argued how legends 'turn a space into a place, and a place into a living space'. Landscape was 'clothed in a vast repertoire of legends' resembling 'a kind of book owned by the community' which provided 'a daily lesson in communal values'.¹³¹ They

served as a map of behaviour, underlining moral and social values and offering examples to follow or avoid. Simultaneously, they reminded people of the temporal and physical borders of their existence; of questions of life and death and periods of liminality; of those who were 'insiders' and those who were 'outsiders'; and, continuously, of the physical and spiritual division between the 'cultural' and the 'wild', what Levi-Strauss might refer to as the 'cooked' and the 'raw'.¹³²

An encounter with a spirit in the landscape reflected not only the fear of the super and preternatural but also embodied the anxieties of that specific place and general setting. Judith Richardson, in her research into Hudson Valley hauntings, noted how 'ghostliness in part served to articulate and contain anxieties about strange places and people'.¹³³ Indeed, this study looks not only at ghosts but how the landscape itself was understood and where man stood in it. The encounters with lonely and ruinous places on the edge of habitation and the dark have been constants in the human condition. Most tales and experiences occurred when the percipient was alone, often in a wild place and in the dark. Humans are animals, albeit with a highly developed social capacity. When they are cut off from other human contact and assistance, in a place where their senses no longer work to their full capacity, then the primal fears of a social species are at their greatest. Studying ghosts reminds us of our limits as a species and how spirits clad these fears in a human form expressive of the anxieties confronting us. A strongly functionalist current runs throughout this thesis but it is undeniable that we as animals are constrained by the sensual limits of our species. As a social animal we construct culture to embody, convey and preserve these ideas which express our ideas of the dark, the borders of our group, malfeasance within our pack and the unknown. This unknown

¹²⁹ Ludwig Lavater, *Of Ghostes and Spirites Walking by Nyght 1572 / Lewes Lavater. Edited with Introduction and Appendix by J. Dover Wilson and May Yardley.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the Shakespeare Association, 1929), 2-8.

¹³⁰ Gunnell, 'Legends', 307.

¹³¹ Gunnell, 'Legends', 308, 310.

¹³² Gunnell, 'Legends', 309.

¹³³ Richardson, *Possessions*, 24.

may be of a place, a state or experience. The fear of death itself is the greatest unknown tying all these threads together.

Landscape and nature were mediums for revelation.¹³⁴ Alongside His glory, bounty and love, God's wrath too was apparent in the landscape and nature. Luther stated that 'God's practice has always been this: whenever he punishes sin, he also curses the earth'.¹³⁵ Walsham noted how despite rejecting the idea that 'sanctity could be localised', hotter reformers 'spoke as if its opposite, iniquity, had an irresistibly material quality', one whose memory in the landscape could not be erased.¹³⁶ The physical world mirrored the spiritual world with sites of punishment and retribution littering both. The early modern mindset has been described as intensely binary, as demonstrated by conceptions of witchcraft.¹³⁷ Ghosts within these landscapes reflected binaries of purity and pollution, of centres and peripheries, of morality and immorality. Through their liminal status, they forcefully emphasised these differences.

Ghosts were just one way, albeit an extremely common one, of inscribing morality, memory and meaning onto the landscape. These societies were placed in the landscape. They understood the supernatural and preternatural through reference to the natural world and how the former intruded into the latter. The land was also populated by tales of nature spirits, fairies and demons, entities which shared some many common tropes and characteristics with the restless dead. Indeed, with the Reformation one could argue that the landscape was increasingly demonised, the city of God assailed on all sites by the wiles of the Enemy, replicating the anxieties of Protestantisms under siege across both the continent and within the more immediate setting of town versus country, a reforming centre set against a more truculent periphery. Though popular ghost stories may not necessarily have abided to the strictest theological niceties for Protestants as well as Catholics, the message they preached could be understood as a demotic form of moral history and instruction firmly grounded in the world around one.

¹³⁴ Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*, 89, 333.

¹³⁵ P. Soergel, *Miracles and the Protestant Imagination: The Evangelical Wonder Book in Reformation Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 63; Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, 73 vols (Weimar: H. Böhlau Nachfolger, 1883-2009), 42: 76.

¹³⁶ Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*, 151.

¹³⁷ S. Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 31-79.

Alexandra Walsham noted how 'the landscape is a surface upon which society successively lays down fresh sediments of meaning without ever being able to remove or conceal existing ones, which remain as powerful presences'.¹³⁸ Protestantism engaged with memories, both Catholic and pagan, of the physical settings it existed within, and they in turn 'accommodated and simultaneously transfigured it'.¹³⁹ It was an example of the dynamic in Protestantism to engage with oral cultures and to colonise them, one showing a religion which was not merely restricted to the realms of print and godly elites alone but had genuine popular appeal and relevance. It has been recognised that Protestantism forged its own popular oral tradition and folklore, through a process of 'recycling older materials and incorporating new ingredients', and by catalysing orality through its preaching and catechising.¹⁴⁰ This thesis will show how Protestants projected meaning and moralities onto the landscape through the medium of supernatural and ghostly tales. It will show how Protestant readings of place compared to Catholic understandings and how older ghostly tropes and stories were reinterpreted and repositioned to reflect both traditional and more current anxieties about generic and specific place and its memories. It will show that though there was a need to push a Protestant slant on legendary hauntings of place, that this largely did not differ from traditional perceptions of these fearful places at fearful times and the dreadful spirits that haunted them.

Both popular and elite understandings were indebted to each other, both feeding off the oral and literate traditions. Indeed, the success of the Christianisation project of which the Reformation was a part, could be measured to some degree by the extent to which textual theologies were transposed onto the landscape, and how they became part of the dominating metaphor in the encounter with the natural world. If a religion is to be successful, it needs to convey their message within metaphors, concepts and approaches the layman or woman understands, feels familiar with and can easily recycle within their own daily life. The great mysteries of Christianity and their core teachings needed to be set in a metaphor people could relate to. Therefore, just as we have St Patrick's Shamrock explaining the Trinity and death described as a dreamless sleep, we have the straight and narrow road reflecting the path to salvation, the city of God as the community of believers set against its enemies from without

¹³⁸ Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*, 564.

¹³⁹ Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*, 553.

¹⁴⁰ A. Walsham, 'Reformed Folklore? Cautionary Tales and Oral Tradition in Early Modern England', in A. Fox and D. Woolf (eds.), *The Spoken Word: Oral Culture in the British Isles 1500-1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 173, 180, 187.

and within, and the afterlife journey to the otherworld representing the transition from this state and place of existence to another. It was one mirroring the path of the believer in life. Place was a constant in understanding and interpreting salvation.

Why War?

War is an area of early modern ghost studies which demands greater research, one this thesis aims to address. Owen Davies and David Lederer have recognised the British Civil Wars and the Thirty Years' War as catalysts for subsequent hauntings.¹⁴¹ Germany suffered dreadfully during the Thirty Years' War, losing between 6 to 8 million people, or between 20 to 45 percent of its population according to some historians.¹⁴² Meanwhile, the British Civil Wars cost the lives of 250,000 people or 7 percent of its total population. Ireland's population may have dropped by a fifth.¹⁴³ Over 150 towns and 50 villages were badly damaged in England and Wales.¹⁴⁴ The physical destruction of these conflicts undoubtedly left a ravaged and often empty landscape devoid of people, one that spirits would have moved into and occupied. Wondering where the lost wealth of these wartime generations went, and how it might be recovered, were further stimuli to legends of ghosts guarding hidden treasure.

War itself was a punishment for sin in Lutheran orthodoxy. So too were ghosts, which were just another example of a spectacular punishment meted out on an individual or community for transgression, secret or otherwise. Numerous signs of God's Providence manifested themselves before or during a war, signalling his displeasure and hinting at an upcoming scourge of scorpions. Other wondrous apparitions conveyed warnings or helped those in dire need. Ghosts, angels and Catholic saints often occupied the same territory by performing the same roles and even appearing in the same guise. War shows a much more varied, colourful and relevant spirit world beyond the tired old Purgatorial tropes that dog much of Reformation polemic on the subject.

¹⁴¹ Davies, *Haunted*, 40-1; D. Lederer, 'Living with the Dead: Ghosts in Early Modern Bavaria', in K.A. Edwards (ed.), *Werewolves, Witches and Wandering Spirits: Traditional Belief and Folklore in Early Modern Europe* (Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies Series; Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2002), 36.

¹⁴² Parker, *Global Crisis*, 249-51.

¹⁴³ Parker, *Global Crisis*, 359-60.

¹⁴⁴ Parker, *Global Crisis*, 360.

We must also remember that the Reformation was an intellectual revolution, one that radically changed the face of European society. The rejection of ghosts that occurred during the Reformation was paralleled and indeed outdone with later revolutions in France, Russia, China and Pol Pot's Cambodia among many others. War and revolution have usually been close bedfellows. Despite the revolutionary rejection of ghosts and spirits in all these societies, belief in ghosts was rehabilitated once either the revolution was tamed or reversed. One must wonder if making peace with the spirit world and ancestors was one way of drawing a line and making peace with the past. One must also ask, as in Reformation Europe, whether once beyond the swivel-eyed zealots of the new order, belief in ghosts had ever gone away in the first place.

We should acknowledge the power of war to act as a force for disenchantment in the world. This is manifested most powerfully in the theodical question how a caring God ever let war happen. As we know, atheism, or what was perceived as such, became a major source of concern for divines in the decades following these wars. Ellen Badone, in a study on twentieth-century attitudes to death and the supernatural in Brittany, noted how for some, 'World War II was the watershed dividing belief and scepticism', with 'fears of the supernatural' being 'outweighed by other, more imminent, natural fears' during the Nazi occupation.¹⁴⁵ We must be aware that war brings these contradictory currents of enchantment and disenchantment to the surface.

However, what will be clear from this thesis is that ghosts and the supernatural were closely intertwined within narratives of war, at the personal and societal level and as a means of negotiating the past, present and future. In an already enchanted world, the stresses and memory of conflict and bloodshed heightened the relevance of spirit narratives as well as demanding an explanation for what these strange and often inexplicable experiences and situations actually were. Furthermore, in the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century, war was constantly present either as a looming threat or as a reality in both England and Germany. The period was marked by two great conflicts. The Great Turkish War (1683-99) raged across Austria and Hungary, threatening at times to spill beyond Vienna. Meanwhile, in Ireland, the Netherlands, Savoy, Catalonia and deep into Germany itself, the

¹⁴⁵ E. Badone, *The Appointed Hour: Death, Worldview, and Social Change in Brittany* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989), 291.

War of the Grand Alliance (1688-97) attempted to confront the rising power of France under Louis XIV (1638-1715). It was in this context that so many of the tales present in this thesis were collected, printed and told and thus inevitable that so many would deal with ghosts in this setting.

This thesis aims to address the gap in the literature involving ghosts and war in the early modern period in the German and English record. There are no specific studies focused on this exact topic. Several deal with supernatural tropes involving spirit armies and ghosts seen in war contexts but none have attempted a wider overview which embraces the diversity of haunting in the period.¹⁴⁶ This contrasts with the interest shown towards ghosts and the supernatural in other conflicts such as the American Revolution (1775-83), the American Civil War (1861-65), World War I (1914-18) and the conflict in Vietnam (1955-75).¹⁴⁷ Medieval war and army ghosts have also been examined by Jean-Claude Schmidt and Claude Lecouteux.¹⁴⁸ Insights from these works dealing with other periods and conflicts have been influential in my own research into ghosts in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Terms for Ghosts

When we look for ghosts in the early modern English record, certain terms stand out. 'Ghost' itself is less frequent than in the modern vernacular as it is suggestive of the soul of the dead. 'Apparition' and 'Spirit' are far more frequent as they can be either good or bad. We also meet the terms 'Spectre' or 'Spectrum', 'Phantasma' and 'Demon' or 'Devil'. It usually depended on the point of view of the author and the activities of the entity itself.

¹⁴⁶ K. Kurihara, *Celestial Wonders in Reformation Germany* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014); S. Matthews, *The Spectral Army of Souther Fell: The Story of a Story* (Carlisle: Bookcase, 2011); V. Jankovic, 'The Politics of Sky Battles in Early Hanoverian Britain', *Journal of British Studies*, 41:4 (2002), 429-59; A. Tierney, 'Return of the Repressed? "Haunted Castles" in Seventeenth Century Munster', *Éire-Ireland*, 45:3 (2010), 7-26; J. Gibney, *The Shadow of a Year: The 1641 Rebellion in Irish History and Memory* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), 84-8, 91-2, 95-102.

¹⁴⁷ Richardson, *Possessions*; D.G. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008); D. Clarke, *The Angel of Mons: Phantom Soldiers and Ghostly Guardians* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2004); O. Davies, *A Supernatural War: Magic, Divination and Faith during the First World War* (Oxford: OUP, 2018); H. Kwon, "The Ghosts of War and the Spirit of Cosmopolitanism", *History of Religions*, 48:1 (2008), 22-42; Kwon, *Ghosts of War in Vietnam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹⁴⁸ Schmitt, *Ghosts*; Lecouteux, *Phantom Armies*.

In German, the term *Gesperst* which is the modern term for ghost is much more loaded.¹⁴⁹ It almost always indicated an evil spirit and was frequently prefixed with the German for 'Devil' to produce *Teufelsgespenst*.¹⁵⁰ Noisy spirits were often termed as *Poltergeist* or *Rumpelgeist*, being derived from a combination of *poltern* (make noise) or *rumplen* (make noise/ fall noisily).¹⁵¹ *Kobold* was also a term often used for a troublesome spirit in a house as opposed to *Gutels*, which were often helpful.¹⁵² As in English, the terms for 'apparition' and 'vision', *Erscheinung* and *Gesichte*, were potentially more neutral though we must remember that this sense was understood to be particularly vulnerable to satanic manipulation in this period.¹⁵³ The classical term *larva* was also used, in both English and German, for an evil spirit appearing in the likeness of the dead. Writers such as Ludwig Lavater often included long taxonomies of classical spirits, near the start of their works, some of which could be associated with spirits of the dead.¹⁵⁴

In view of these terms, the ghosts that I am focused on in this thesis are those that appear in the likeness of the dead, mimic their behaviour or are closely associated with death. This may be the actual spirit of the deceased or it may not be. I will not restrict myself to what Protestant polemic mocked as the spirit of the dead *par excellence*, the supplicatory Purgatorial ghost. Instead, by looking at a wide range of tropes, in different places and in different situations (notably war), I hope to present a much more realistic and comprehensive portrait of the ghost, more in tune with popular belief.

Outline of Study

This thesis is divided into two chapters which are then subdivided into themed sections.

The first chapter looks at ghosts and stories linked to certain places. We start by examining how people understood hauntedness within their own local communities, and how this

¹⁴⁹ Lecouteux, *Return*, 131; Lecouteux, *Secret History*, 22-3.

¹⁵⁰ H. Bächthold-Stäubli, E. Hoffmann-Krayer and G. Lüdtkke, *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, 10 vols (Berlin: Gruyter, 1987), III, 766-771.

¹⁵¹ Lecouteux, *Secret History*, 21.

¹⁵² Lecouteux, *Secret History*, 23-5, 120.

¹⁵³ S. Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 123-160.

¹⁵⁴ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 1-8.

helped define spatial, moral, and metaphysical boundaries between human and spirit worlds. We will look at how sin was remembered in the landscape through hauntings by Catholics and Protestants, and how these walkings of spirits in place reflected confessional differences. From there, we will look at how the Devil haunted the wilds and coursed the woods. We will note the difficulties encountered in discerning the human dead amongst the spirits of the wild. We will examine spirit lights in the countryside at night and how they were interpreted. We will look at why ruins were infested with spirits and how decay was both cause and consequence of hauntings. The haunted monastery was one such place which reflected the deeper confessional rivalries, and ambivalences of the Reformation. From there, we will examine why the graveyard remained a place of fear and power, and how themes of purity and pollution were negotiated by apparitions and how this current of belief ran uninterrupted from the medieval into the early modern period. Revenants, or the dangerous dead who lurked in their graves or rose from them to wreak havoc amongst the living, deserve their own special mention here, as well as the graveyard being a site for ghostly portents and destination of funeral processions of spirits. We will look at the haunted house from the outside and see how people discerned ghosts in ways different from the theologians. We will see how treasure was central to many hauntings. The haunted castle was another site where apparitions were seen, tied to dark memories of the past and warning of the imminent death of their occupants. The final site we consider is the haunted inn, a place evocative of murderous innkeepers and violated hospitalities, obscured identities and of death far from home.

The second chapter deals with ghosts linked to war, seen prior to, during and after a conflict. It starts with ghostly armies of spirits seen on land and in the skies and their multiple meanings. It looks at the *Wütende Heer*, an army of spirits that haunted the wilds at night and examines its links to other ghostly army tropes. It then examines the haunted battlefield and how themes of slaughter, pollution and bad death were interpreted through Protestant and Catholic spirit tropes. We will look at the role atrocity played in making ghosts and how they were both creatures of individual conscience and wider national and confessional memory. We then consider apparitions associated with the wicked lifestyle of the soldier and how these acted as supernatural figures of discipline and punishment. We will examine how apparitions negotiated anxieties involving loss, how they warned of death and, as wraiths, conveyed news from the fallen to loved ones far away. We will look at ballad and literary

tropes of revenant lovers in war, of treasure lost and found and of how spirits helped resolve the peace for those returning from the wars. We will examine how the Thirty Years' War and British Civil Wars were instrumental in the upsurge in ghost tracts and sightings after these conflicts and how they seeded the landscape with spirits that would enable a more Protestant ghostlore to emerge, one that persists to this day.

I hope to show how people who thought of themselves as Protestants or were identified by others as such, understood apparitions and supernatural tropes and activity that could be linked to the realm of the dead. This, in turn, will show continuities across time and region of a supernatural that adapted to serve the needs of society and the individual.

Chapter 1: Landscapes of Fear. Place and Haunting

If a drunken farmer, returning from market, fell from Old Dobbin and broke his neck-or a carter, under the same predicament, tumbled from his cart or waggon, and was killed by it-that spot was ever after haunted and impassable: In short, there was scarcely a bye-lane or cross-way but had its ghost.¹⁵⁵

This chapter will consider the role place played in early modern English and German ghost stories and belief. Problems concerning the reconstruction of mentalities from texts have already been discussed in the introduction though of course in this instance, where place is so much linked to oralities, we are at a disadvantage. I will argue that by looking at the texts as well as anthropological models on how place interacts with memories, and how pollution and liminality are linked to location, that this difficulty can be surmounted to a degree. Furthermore, by considering how aspects of hauntedness of place were understood within Christian traditions, and how liminal landscapes played host to both the dead and non-human spirits and places, we can approach more clearly the question of discernment which lay at the core of Reformation debates regarding the identity of the ghost.

Much of the recent research into the ghosts of early modern England and Germany has focused on a spectre haunting the person for a specific purpose, where the setting in which the story occurs is incidental to the grander moral and metaphysical message imparted by the encounter with the spirit itself. The purposeful and interventionist nature of early modern haunting has been noted by several historians.¹⁵⁶ Indeed, John Bossy claimed that this ghost 'haunted people, not places'.¹⁵⁷ Purgatorial ghosts plead, Luther's demons rage and revenants prowl. Other spirits demand justice, either for their heirs or their murderers and portents point out the workings of Providence. It is the nature and action of the spirit and the response of the witnesses which are important. Even texts describing entities inside houses such as the

¹⁵⁵ Francis Grose, *A Provincial Glossary with a Collection of Local Proverbs and Popular Superstitions* / by Francis Grose. (London, 1787), 3.

¹⁵⁶ Thomas, *Religion*, 712; Davies, *Haunted*, 4, 45,

¹⁵⁷ J. Bossy, *Christianity in the West 1400-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 29.

poltergeist trope or hauntings associated with witchcraft are interpreted as concentrating more on the person afflicted by the demon rather than the place in which this test occurs. Place becomes a mere incidental backdrop for this encounter.

This is in stark contrast to the importance place plays in later eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth-century literary texts, and much of folklore, where the purposeful ghost retreats to be replaced by more apparently purposeless 'silent memorial ghosts', haunting a specific location.¹⁵⁸ It is also one that has been questioned by Owen Davies who noted how ghost story collectors like Glanvill, Baxter, Bovet and Sinclair, were intent on depicting ghosts, whose return to earth had been sanctioned by God with 'divine missions to perform'.¹⁵⁹ Therefore, they 'had little interest in ghosts that made no attempt to contact or disturb the living, and simply acted as silent, self-absorbed memorials of fate and activities of the former living'.¹⁶⁰ It is also in sharp contrast to the picture that unfolds when the sources for the early modern period are re-examined. The haunted house, castle or cemetery were not so much creations of the gothic but a repackaging of much older tropes. The haunted house has been an enduring trope in the western literary tradition from the time of Plautus and Pliny and likewise, when we look closely, we find many stigmatised properties in early modern English and German texts. Ruined buildings, whether secular or religious, litter the sixteenth and seventeenth-century records with the fear they evoked. Haunted castles are prominent throughout the German texts and inns too had an evil reputation, tainted with supernatural skulduggery. Graveyards were perceived as places of dread and pollution and best avoided at night. A whole landscape of fear unfolds before the reader with some spirits bound to places while others roamed the countryside and forests. Even portents, seen often as workings of divine Providence, were often tied to a family home or seat or place where power was exercised. This chapter will examine these issues. It will set out the case that place was vital to an understanding of what ghosts and spirits were, and what their functions were in the early modern English and German landscapes.

¹⁵⁸ Davies, *Haunted*, 8-9, 40.

¹⁵⁹ O. Davies, *Ghosts: A Social History*, 5 vols (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), I, 1660-1762: *The Enlightenment*, xlv.

¹⁶⁰ Davies, *Haunted*, 8.

Within the landscape, there were certain places more notorious for sightings of ghosts and spirits than others. Ludwig Lavater (1527-1586), the author of *De Spectris* (1569), a work that defined Protestant ghost theory for much of the early modern period, wrote:

And albeit these are heard or seene in al places, yet are they most especially conuersant in the fieldes where battels have ben fought, or in places where slaughters have ben made: in places of execution: in woods into the which they have coniured devils being cast out of men: in Churches, Monasteries and about sepulchres, in the boundes of countries, & butts of lands: in prysons, houses & towers, and sometime also in the ruines and rubbish of castles.¹⁶¹

Noel Taillepied (1540-1589), the Catholic priest who issued a rebuttal to Lavater in a work that echoed much of the latter's opus, despite stressing that 'there are no particular spots', and that 'they have been seen and heard in every circumstance', then went on to acknowledge very similar locations:

Chiefly, I mean, do they appear in places where in times past there have been horrid deeds, assassinations, riot and rape, or on battlefields; and again on spots where foul murder has been done, by lonely gallows, in woods and not unseldom even in churches and cloisters, near sepulchres and in graveyards, in prisons, old manor houses and castles, sometimes too in the shadow of stately palaces.¹⁶²

As this chapter will show, Protestants shared the same haunted spaces that Catholics did. They also remained similar throughout the period. For example, the Frankfurt physician, Johann Jacob Bräuner (b. 1647), whose work on spirits was finally published in 1737, noted how ghosts were seen 'in such places where death and murder have happened, where great bloodbaths have occurred or where people were executed'.¹⁶³ Admittedly, we should be aware that certain works, most notably Lavater's *De Spectris*, were frequently recycled throughout the period in reprints or quarried by later writers for text and tales. Despite this,

¹⁶¹ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 90-1.

¹⁶² Noel Taillepied, *A Treatise of Ghosts: Being the Psychologie, Or Treatise upon Apparitions and Spirits, of Disembodied Souls, Phantom Figures, Strange Prodigies, and of Other Miracles and Marvels, which often Presage the Death of some Great Person, Or Signify some Swift Change in Public Affairs* (London: Fortune Press, 1933), 98.

¹⁶³ Johann Jacob Bräuner, *Physicalisch= und Historisch= Erörterte Curiositaeten; Oder: Entlarvter Teufflischer Aberglaube von Wechselbälgen / Wehr=Wölffen / Fliegenden Drachen / Galgen=Männlein / Diebs=Daumen / Hexen=Tantz / Holung auf dem Bock / Irrwischen / Spiritu Familiari / Festmachung / Wütenden Heer / Lösel=Nächten / Alpdrücken / Nessel=Knüpfen / Hexen=Buhlschafft mit dem Teuffel / Crystallen=Schauern / Wahr=sagungen und andern dergleichen [...]* in *50. curiosen Materien fürgestellt* (Frankfurt am Main, 1737), 267. 'an solchen Orten, da Mord und Todtschlag geschehen, da groß Blutbad vorgegangen, oder etwa Leute sind umgebracht worden'.

the association of certain places with spirits remained so strong, that one could not dismiss this as the mere legacy of one author or work.

Identities, Liminalities and patrolling the Boundaries

The great critic of Catholicism Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) recounted a 'relation of an Artificial and Famous Imposture' concerning the haunting of a bridge near London, and the priest brought in to exorcise it. What is of most interest is how Erasmus, a scholar so much on the cusp of the middle ages and early modern period, established the physical setting for the tale in a dialogue between a Thomas and Anselmus. It is in a format familiar to anyone today who appreciates a traditional ghost story. It is one where place is critical to the telling:

Ans: Do not you know *Pool*, *Fawn's* Son-in-Law?

Th: Perfectly well.

Ans: He's both the *Contriver* of it, and the Chief *Actor* in the *Play*.

Th: I am apt enough to believe that; for he's a Man to do any Part to the Life.

Ans: 'Tis Right: Do you not know a Farm that he has a little way from *London*?

Th: Oh! Very well. He and I have crackt many a Bottle together there.

Ans: There's a way, you know, betwixt two streight Rows of Trees.

Th: A matter of *Two Flight shot* from the House, upon the left Hand.

Ans: That's it. One side of the way has a dry Ditch, that's over-grown with Brambles; and then there's a little Bridge, that leads into an open Field.

Th: I remember it.

Ans: There went a Report among the Country People, of a *Spirit* that

walkt there; and of hideous *Howlings* that were heard about that Bridge, which made them conclude it to be the Soul of some Body that was miserably Termented.¹⁶⁴

Place is an integral part of the telling of this story and others. It is a vital issue when reconstructing ghosts in popular belief. The local ghost is a ghost based on oralities. It is the ghost taught by the women and old. It is the spirit that one was taught to fear as a child alongside the dark and wild places, the dread of which persists long after childhood is over. It is the one actually encountered, in place. It is more powerful than the one of the polemical text, penned by clergymen or intellectuals. Of course, aspects of the wider mentality of the time filter down into local interpretations and tropes of the supernatural but that supernatural still most often occurs in a place known to that community. Whereas the polemical ghost encountered in the print texts is one defining confessional boundaries, the local ghost acts to define community identity in which the tale is set.

Country people were famed for their storytelling skills encompassing a bestiary of mythical beings and creatures such as giants, devils, fairies and goblins alongside their own tales of Caesar and King Arthur in England. Ghosts played a major part in these tales and legends. This is apparent from the English record. The historian Henry Bourne (1694-1733), wrote that 'Nothing is commoner in country places than for a whole family in a winter's evening, to sit round the fire and tell stories of apparitions and ghosts'.¹⁶⁵ In the 1730 pamphlet *Round about our Coalfire*, a chapter on bogeymen and hobgoblins recounted that 'One of the great Amusements, when the Country-folks begin to repose themselves, is to relate the direful Account of the above Monsters, which their Nurses or Mothers had describ'd to them, under the most terrible Shapes'.¹⁶⁶ Joseph Addison (1672-1719), in his play *The Drummer* (1715), satirised this trope with one character stating that he had 'known many a country lady come to London with frightful stories of the hall-house being haunted, of fairies, spirits, and witches' but 'by the time she had seen a comedy, played at an assembly, and ambled in a ball or two, has been so little afraid of bug-bears, that she has ventured home in a chair at all hours of the night'.¹⁶⁷ Dismissed as mere 'idle stories, to amuse the country people' who were

¹⁶⁴ Desiderius Erasmus, *Twenty-Two Select Colloquies out of Erasmus Roterodamus pleasantly representing several Superstitious Levities that were crept into the Church of Rome in his Days* (London, 1689), 186.

¹⁶⁵ Henry Bourne, *Antiquitates Vulgares; Or the Antiquities of the Common People* (Newcastle, 1725), 76.

¹⁶⁶ Dick Merryman, *Round about our Coal Fire, or, Christmas Entertainments* (London, 1730), 12.

¹⁶⁷ Joseph Addison, *The Drummer; or, the Haunted House. A Comedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, by His Majesty's Servants* (London, 1715), 12.

‘wonderfully bent to make the most of all stories of Witchcraft’, supernatural tales of ghosts were perceived as symptomatic of the fear engendered by the darkness of the country night compounded by the spiritual and intellectual darkness of the rural and particularly, female mind.¹⁶⁸

However, it is crucial to see beyond the disdain of these writers and recognise, in their observations, how these tales embodied and ingrained values of community and memory in the landscape around them. Andy Wood argued that ‘the local remained the central locus of popular memory throughout this period’.¹⁶⁹ This local unit of identity was the parish. The parish church with the graves of their forebears lay at its centre, a constant reminder of the legitimacy of their descendants to the rights and duties that went with membership of the community. David Warren Sabean commented, that though members of the community might not fully agree on the same values, they were ‘engaged in the same argument, the same *raisonnement*, the same *Rede*, the same discourse’ which united them against threats and problems from within and without the parish.¹⁷⁰ This discourse was marked by gossip, slander, local character anecdotes, legends and ghost stories which linked people, both past and present to the landscape and properties of the parish and the rights which went with them. The very act of telling expressed that one was part of this community, that one knew details of landscapes and people, collective memories that would be foreign to a stranger. And just as one was defined by who one was, a person was also defined by whom one was not. Bounds were laid down on what was socially acceptable and socially unacceptable in a community. Bounds were also laid down in the clear definition of the physical borders of the parish. Keith Snell remarked on how ‘the social conscience of a rural people is limited by the parish bounds’.¹⁷¹ Andy Wood has also cited late childhood and adolescence ‘as the most important times at which memories of the bounds were impressed’.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ Addison, *Drummer*, 20; Francis Hutchinson, *An Historical Essay concerning Witchcraft With Observations upon Matters of fact; ... And also two Sermons* (London, 1720), 153.

¹⁶⁹ A. Wood, *The Memory of the People: Custom and Popular Senses of the Past in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 12.

¹⁷⁰ D.W. Sabean, *Power in the Blood: Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 29.

¹⁷¹ K. Snell, *Parish and Belonging: Community, Identity and Welfare in England and Wales, 1700-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 28.

¹⁷² Wood, *Memory*, 232.

Names and memory go together when understanding our environment. Christopher Tilley wrote that 'in a fundamental way, names create landscape'.¹⁷³ By giving a place a name, we classify it, we put it in an order, we link the name to the location and to memories of that place, either imagined or real.¹⁷⁴ Naming is both by toponym and by the stories linked to a location. Just as we physically occupy and pass through space in the environment around us, we also engage with it cognitively and understand it, not merely through our own experiences but also through the memories and experiences of those who have interacted with this landscape before us. As we plot these memories in the landscape, spatially and temporally, we create in effect a haunted landscape linking places to people and events which not merely define that place but also the underlying social, economic and moral forces that permeate our own societies.¹⁷⁵ Unlike the fearless Scythian nomads who famously saw no ghosts, agriculture, whether arable or pastoral, ties people to the land over generations and according to Evald Tang Kristensen, is a requisite for ghost belief.¹⁷⁶

Not merely does one confront a legend in situ, but one also lives the legend and that landscape acquires agency.¹⁷⁷ Certain locations become places of power associated with entities whether they be ghosts, devils or nature spirits. These are places to be avoided or approached with caution or apotropaics, where stories and memory modify one's own interaction with the landscape. They are places where either something has happened, or something deserves to have happened. By being dangerous, they imply that other places are safe. By being loci of potential immorality, they suggest that other locations are more moral. Interaction there can become performative as in the case of sites associated with legend tripping.¹⁷⁸ As places of disorder, they attracted such elements.

Liminal and boundary areas attract legends and ghost stories. Humanity as a species is both enabled and restricted by its own physiological and perceptive capacities, and, as an animal with language and a highly developed social capability, by its tendency to operate within

¹⁷³ C. Tilly, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths and Monuments* (Providence, RI: Berg, 1994), 19.

¹⁷⁴ Dégh, *Legend*, 23.

¹⁷⁵ N. Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape: Place, Custom and Memory, 1500-1800* (Oxford: Windgatherer Press, 2009), 20, 158; Gunnell, 'Legends', 307-8.

¹⁷⁶ Bennett, "Alas Poor Ghost", 29.

¹⁷⁷ E. Bird, 'Playing with Fear: Interpreting the Adolescent Legend Trip', *Western Folklore*, 53:3 (1994), 207; J.B. Thomas (ed.), *Putting the Supernatural in Its Place: Folklore, the Hypermodern, and the Ethereal* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2015), 20.

¹⁷⁸ L. Gabbert, 'Legend Quests and the Curious Case of St. Ann's Retreat: The Performative Landscape', in Thomas (ed.), *Putting the Supernatural*, 147.

social groups. Liminal areas are places where the human interacts with other human groups and also where it shares space with the spirit world. Certain places, types of landscape and the hours of darkness all place limits on the ability of humanity to function within these environments. Such places also have the tendency to physically separate communities from each other thus play their part in the designation of borders between rival groups. Lying outside the direct control of the authorities, they are also places that attract those who refuse to conform to the morality and laws of society or those considered impure such as lepers.¹⁷⁹ The boundary is a dangerous liminal zone, characterised by order within and chaos without, which needs to be marked, remembered and patrolled. Methods of boundary control and maintenance involving walking included beating the bounds, 'bannering', 'hunting the borough', 'processioning', 'ganging' and 'possessing', often performed by rival youth gangs.¹⁸⁰ In an age where moving through the landscape cognitively, from landmark, to landmark, fulfilled the role that maps and written records would later serve, it was imperative to recognise, name and thus possess these features.¹⁸¹ Ghost and apparition stories were particularly apt as a mnemonic in laying down these boundaries and as a way of defining the limits of a community physically, mentally and morally.¹⁸²

Liminal areas including parish boundaries were thus caught in a self-perpetuating legend cycle as places of impurity attracting chaos and malfeasants while simultaneously being places of ambiguity which demanded explanation, not least because of their vital importance in defining boundaries within and without the community. They were dangerous places which demanded greater vigilance when visited. Supernatural legends and the fear these sites caused thus heightened sensual alertness and functioned as a more efficient means of keeping watch on the boundary. In a heightened state of alertness, it was also easier to mistake things on the periphery of one's vision or senses and interpret them through the pollution associated with that place. Personal experiences would then enter the cycle of memorate to legend as they were told and retold over time and to different audiences.

¹⁷⁹ Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape*, 27.

¹⁸⁰ Snell, *Parish*, 38.

¹⁸¹ Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape*, 73; C.E. Boyd and C. Thrush (eds), *Phantom Past, Indigenous Presence: Native Ghosts in North American Culture and History* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), xii.

¹⁸² W.A. Christian Jr., *Person and God in a Spanish Valley* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 73.

It is likely that ghost belief within communities served as a form of self-policing of movement and morality which in turn served to strengthen community identity as well as police and beat the bounds. It has been noted that supernatural legends have functioned as means of controlling movement at night, particularly that of children.¹⁸³ Gladys-Marie Fry described a nightscape of fear in the American South during the nineteenth century, where certain whites would dress up as ghosts to control the nocturnal movements and outdoor activities of Afro-Americans.¹⁸⁴ This thesis cannot adequately answer the question whether ghost belief was deliberately exploited by European elites, in a similar manner as Fry described, to control the movement of country folk at night. However, dressing up as a spirit was perceived as a frequently used cover by those intent on breaking the rules. This included criminals such as burglars.¹⁸⁵ It included those pursuing illicit love affairs, whether they be young men and women or lecherous monks.¹⁸⁶ It also encompassed pranksters, playing the sprite, who would use liminal places, such as places of execution, graveyards and inns, to frighten passers-by and guests.¹⁸⁷

Deviants in the Landscape

‘Next after Sepulchres and Churchyardes, the Gibets or common places of executions, are greatly feared of the vulgar sort, who do thinke that Spirits do haunt and frequent there also. And for that cause, such fooles do never cease haunting those places, of purpose to feare and terrifie such as passe neere unto the same. To make short, those places are so frightfull in the night time, to some fearfull and timorous persons, that if they heare the voice of any person neere the place where any be hanging, they will thinke it is their spirits or ghosts that do walke thereabouts’.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸³ A. Bruford, ‘Trolls, Hillfolk, Finns, and Picts: The Identity of the Good Neighbors in Orkney and Shetland’, in P. Narváez (ed.), *The Good People: New Fairylore Essays* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, 1997), 117.

¹⁸⁴ G.M. Fry, *Night Riders in Black Folk History* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 69, 72, 180-2.

¹⁸⁵ Taillepie, *Treatise*, 33.

¹⁸⁶ Taillepie, *Treatise*, 32-3; Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 22, 46,

¹⁸⁷ Taillepie, *Treatise*, 32; Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 22; Pierre Le Loyer, *A Treatise of Specters or Straunge Sights, Visions and Apparitions appearing sensibly vnto Men Wherein is delivered, the Nature of Spirites, Angels, and Divels: Their Power and Properties: As also of Witches, Sorcerers, Enchanters, and such like. With a Table of the Contents of the several Chapters annexed in the End of the Booke. Newly done out of French into English* (London, 1605), 78.

¹⁸⁸ Le Loyer, *Treatise*, 78.

One major source for these tales was the placing of the deviant dead on boundaries. Erasmus Francisci (1627-1694), the Lübeck-born polyhistorian who compiled the largest collection of ghost stories in seventeenth-century Germany, noted how spirits were seen 'more easily and frequently in such places where either criminals lie on wheels or hang on gallows'.¹⁸⁹ The deviant dead included those executed for crimes in situ and suicides, both groups being dumped in this liminal zone. Indeed, their crimes were also often committed in the same zone. Gallows, wheels and gibbets were usually set on parish or administrative boundaries and were recognised as landmarks denoting these bounds.¹⁹⁰ Barrows, ringforts and prehistoric burial mounds were also recycled as places of execution and dishonourable burial and thus also functioned as boundary markers.¹⁹¹ The crossroads was a site traditionally associated with the burial of suicides. In England, their corpses would be staked. This may have had two further functions beyond a typical rite of humiliation. The first, as one often finds in tales of revenants and other walking undead, was to symbolically 'kill' the corpse itself. The second, and more likely the case in England according to Owen Davies, was to pin the spirit to that specific location and prevent it from wandering.¹⁹²

Expelled from their own communities for transgressions and denied the rights of passage associated with membership of that society, the remains of criminals were publicly displayed and humiliated. Such spectacles served as a powerful warning to insiders of the morality and standards expected of its members, and the terrible fate of exclusion that awaited transgressors. They also defined boundaries of power between communities by the public exhibition of body parts. The spiritual fate of these deviants was as dreadful as the indignities heaped upon their mortal remains. The ethnologist Arnold Van Gennep described how they were condemned 'to wander between the world of the dead and that of the living'.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ Erasmus Francisci, *Der Höllische Proteus /oder Tausendkünstige Versteller / vermittelt Erzählung der vielfältigen Bild-Verwechslungen Erscheinender Gespenster / Werffender und poltrender Geister / gespenstischer Vorzeichen der Todes-Fälle / Wie auch Andrer abentheurlicher Händel / arglistiger Possen /und seltsamer Aufzüge dieses verdammten Schauspielers / und / Von theils Gelehrten / für den menschlichen Leben-Geist irrig-angesehenen Betriegers / (nebenst vorberichtlichem Grund-Beweis der Gewißheit / daß es würcklich Gespenster gebe) abgebildet durch Erasmum Francisci / Hochgräfl. Hohenloh-Langenburgischen Raht* (Nuremberg, 1690), 986. 'Doch wird es noch leichter und öffter geschehen /an solchen Oertern / da die abgethanene Missethäter entweder auf dem Rade ligen / oder am Galgen hangen'.

¹⁹⁰ Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape*, 155-161; N. Whyte, 'The Deviant Dead in the Norfolk Landscape', *Landscape*, 4:1 (2003), 30, 34-5.

¹⁹¹ Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape*, 40.

¹⁹² Davies, *Haunted*, 52.

¹⁹³ M. MacDonald and T.R. Murphy, *Sleepless Souls - Suicide in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 46.

Damned by their sins, and denied the rites of passage necessary to neutralise the impurity of their corpses and for them to negotiate the journey to the underworld, they were condemned to wander the liminal zone between both realities and in effect became guardian spirits of the community's morals and boundaries by default. Furthermore, their spirits were often perceived to linger around where their corpses had rotted.¹⁹⁴

These corpses were denied both physical and spiritual protection against scavengers. With no one to protect their remains, their corpses were easy prey for those who harvested their parts for magic or medicine. The French demonologist Henry Boguet (1550-1619) recounted the fate of a corpse 'of one who had been tortured' and 'left in the road outside the town' of Nancy in Lothringen. During the night, 'a thigh and a leg had been cut off from the body', a deed Boguet attributed to the activities of a witch. The same night, a spectre was seen hovering over the corpse.¹⁹⁵ The cadavers of executed criminals were also particularly vulnerable to demonic possession. There was the belief that the Devil would inhabit the corpses of hanged criminals.¹⁹⁶ This was how he had physical intercourse with witches.¹⁹⁷

Christian Lehmann (1611-1688) was a German Protestant minister famous for his regional account of the Thirty Years War in the Erz Mountains in Saxony. He also wrote the book called *Historischer Schauplatz derer natürlichen Merkwürdigkeiten in dem Meißnischen Ober-Ertzgebirge* (1699), which was an account of the landscape, flora, fauna and local history of his homeland around Meissen and the Erz. Despite its title, it was not a mere pastoral painting of an idealised peasant lifestyle or landscape. Rather, within its pages, we find some of the most striking examples of ghosts and spirits in any early modern collection. It was a liminal area, both in terms of a topography of mountains and forests and ethnically, being the borderlands between Saxony and Bohemia. It also lay along the Protestant-Catholic faultline

¹⁹⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 135-6.

¹⁹⁵ Henry Boguet, *An Examen of Witches: Edited and with an Introduction by Montague Summers* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2009), 152.

¹⁹⁶ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 837, 851-2; Robert Burton, *The Kingdom of Darkness: Or the History of Daemons, Specters, Witches, Apparitions, Possessions, Disturbances, and other wonderful and supernatural Delusions, mischievous Feats, and malicious Impostures of the Devil Containing near fourscore memorable Relations, foreign and domestick, both antient and modern. Collected from authentick Records, real Attestations, credible Evidences, and asserted by Authors of undoubted Verity. Together with a Preface obviating the common Objections and Allegations of the Sadduces and Atheists of the Age, who deny the being of Spirits, Witches, &c. With pictures of several memorable Accidents. By R. B. Licensed and entred according to order* (London, 1688), 91-2.

¹⁹⁷ Boguet, *Examen*, 21, 33.

between northern and southern Germany. Mountain areas themselves were an ecological area that often proved resistant to religious and social reform, even into the late seventeenth century.¹⁹⁸ Lehmann's work vividly captures popular supernatural belief firmly linked to place. A Protestant perspective inevitably pervades his writings, one inscribed onto a landscape of fear. He stated that 'If the mountains and forests could talk, they would tell so much of murder and highway robbery that one would hardly dare to go through a pass or wood again'.¹⁹⁹ The landscape near Meissen embodied memories of sin, and it was in the place where these transgressions had occurred, that 'the evil spirits have such places of murder for their place of pleasure and stamping ground'.²⁰⁰

The section on suicides was probably the most understated but powerful part of the work dealing with spirits. Memories of specific suicides were tied firmly to the sites where the person's body was buried or where the deed had been done. These places then became uncanny through this association. Lehmann recorded the events and reactions simply and without elaboration. On the 25th July 1610, Balthasar Baum poisoned his pregnant wife before hanging himself in his chamber. He was cut down by the executioner and buried in his field.²⁰¹ No mention was made of evil spirits, but it was clear that the places and deeds were engraved onto the local imagination. On the 3rd August 1649, Michael Lorentz hanged himself in his house in Buchholtz. Cut down, dragged away and buried, it was 'a place which Satan made very uncanny'.²⁰² The place of the crime and site where the body was dumped were haunted by the deed and possibly also by the evil spirits that lingered either at that location or near the corpse of the evildoer. The death of a man from Schöna village who shot himself on the

¹⁹⁸ P. Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 238.

¹⁹⁹ Christian Lehmann, *Christian Lehmanns Sen. weiland Pastoris zu Scheibenberg Historischer Schauplatz derer natürlichen Merckwürdigkeiten in dem Meißnischen Ober-Ertzgebirge: Darinnen Eine außführliche Beschreibung dieser gantzen gebirgischen und angränzenden Gegend/ Nach ihrem Lager/ Gestalt/ Bergen/ Thälern/ Felßen/ Flüssen/ Brunnen/ warmen Bädern ... enthalten / Weiland von dem seel. Autore ... zusammen getragen ... Nun aber Mit schönen Kupfern und nöthigen Figuren gezieret/ und ... aufgethan von dessen Hinterlassenen Erben* (Leipzig, 1699), 65. 'Wann die Berge und Wälder reden könnten/ würden sie von Mord und Strassen=Raub so viel erzehlen/ Daß uns grausen dürffte/ mehr durch einen Paß und wald zu gehen'.

²⁰⁰ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 77. 'Denn die bösen Geister haben auf solchen Mordplätzen ihren Freuden und Tummel=Marck/ und können nicht wohl leiden/ daß man sie necke und ausfodere'.

²⁰¹ Lehman, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 71. 'Anno 1610. den 25 Julii verzweiffelte Balthasar Baum, Richter in Unterwiesenthal/ ein Trunckenbold und Ehebrecher/ der sein schwanger Weib hatte mit Gifft hingerichtet/ erhieng sich in der Hauß=kammer an eine klaffter Schnur/ wurde vom Hencker unter den Schwelle herausgezogen/ und auf sein Feld begraben/ darbey es viel Leute hat erschreckt'.

²⁰² Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 72. 'Anno 1649. den 3. Augusti, wurde Michael Lorentz/ ein desperater Bortenwircker im Buchholtz/ der sich in seinem Hause aufgeknüpffet hatte/ abgehauen/ hinauf den Felß geschleppt/ und daselbst begraben/ darauf der Satan den Ort sehr unheimlich gemacht'.

edge of a cliff, with the intention of falling into the river, on the 3 November 1656, 'made that place very eerie'.²⁰³ Deaths by drowning and falls often raised questions, as if the person was alone, it was difficult to ascertain how it had happened. It could have been accidental, or it could have been a crime carried out by others, and thus reason for a ghost to appear to plead its innocence. The worst possibility for the deceased was suicide, which damned them and excluded them from the graveyard. On the 6 June 1663, Nicolaus Theile, a miller, hanged himself from a spruce and was subsequently cut down and thrown in a hole. Three weeks earlier, the Devil in his shape had been seen lying beside a grave in the cemetery.²⁰⁴ The manner of his death, his pre-mortem graveyard apparition and his dishonourable burial, mutually corroborated the narrative that this was an evil man, forever excluded from the community. The last case to consider was that of Catharina Singer, who on the 15th August 1672 hanged herself and was buried in the forest near Schwarzbach. Afterwards, people claimed that the path to the church was haunted.²⁰⁵

The memory of their unnatural deaths and subsequent *Eselbegräbnis* or dishonourable burial in the forest were enough to frighten the locals into avoiding these places made uncanny by their moral and physical pollution. They were evil people who made evil ends of themselves. They were no longer part of the community but lay outside it, buried in fields, forests or dumped in rivers. Their memory was permanently associated with the deeds they committed, in the places they committed them. These locations gained agency in the landscape itself, the memory of past transgressions serving as a morality warning to the living and modifying actual behaviour near these sites themselves.

²⁰³ Lehman, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 71. 'Anno 1656. den 3. Nov. verzweiffelte der Heckenreuter im Dorff Schöna/ unter dem Amt. Wiesenburg/ gieng mit dem rohr in Wald/ an die Mulda/ stieg auf einen Felß/ erschöß sich daselbst/ in Meynung herunter in das Wasser zufallen/ blieb aber liegen/ und machte gedachten Ort sehr unheimlich'.

²⁰⁴ Lehman, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 71. 'Anno 1663. Den 6. Junii, erhieng sich Nicolaus Thiele der Müller zur kleinen Bobritzsch in der Frauensteiner Resier an eine kleine Fichte/ und wurde allda abgehauen/ und in ein Loch geworffen/ in dessen Gestalt der böse Geist drey Wochen zuvor auf dem Gottesacker im Graß bei einen Grab gelegen'.

²⁰⁵ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 72. 'Anno 1672. den 15 Aug. erhieng sich in der Mitweyde Catharina Andreae Singers junges Weib auf dem obern Boden über den Flachsknotten/ wurde durch zwey Schinder=knechte herunter gestürzt/ und im Wald nacher Schwarzbach begraben/ da es hernach die Leute auff dem Kirchsteig offft bethöret hat'.

Purgatories of Place

We have looked at how the place of the dead was understood in relation to memory, morality, liminal and boundary places. Catholic thought had incorporated these themes and anxieties within the Purgatorial paradigm of place and state. Though Protestant thinkers vehemently rejected Purgatory, its legacy and memory persisted, and it was upon this framework that the ghost within a new Protestant landscape was built. Likewise, popular belief throughout the period was repeatedly castigated as retaining concepts closely identified with Catholicism despite the best efforts of the reformers.

As the theology of Purgatory developed during the middle ages, the Catholic Church recognised the potential for ghost stories to legitimise its existence and the economy of the sacred that facilitated the passage of souls through it. Ghost stories were ideal in that they were a storytelling medium with a long pedigree in both learned and popular discourse. The ghost, in literary tales, was encountered in this specific location and demonstrated the power of the Church. Firstly, the restless plight of the spirit reaffirmed the morality preached by the Church. Secondly, the Church had the power both to protect the living from the dead and give that soul peace. The power behind the Christian appropriation of the ghost story to convey teaching was that it embodied these anxieties of place, person and memory so well. Whenever the same location was encountered in future, one would be reminded to varying degrees of the dreadful fate of sinners trapped in these places through their transgressions and thus modify one's behaviour accordingly.

Souls in Purgatory were perfect expressions of liminal beings. They were no longer fully part of this world, nor had they fully progressed to the next. As they were not 'fully cleansed', they had 'not departed from this world and time'.²⁰⁶ The idea that souls were punished both in the underworld and on the surface of the earth had a long provenance in western Christian thinking and was a key element in Gregory the Great's (c.540-604) adoption of ghost stories as didactic devices.²⁰⁷ The Second Council of Lyons in 1274 potentially did away with this when

²⁰⁶ Petrus Thyraeus, *Loca Infesta, Hoc est: De Infestis, Ob Molestantes Daemoniorvm Et Defvntorvm Hominvm Spiritvs, Locis, Liber Vnvs: in Qvo Spiritvum Infestantivm genra, conditiones, vires, discrimina ... discutiuntur et explicantur; accessit eiusdem Libellus de Terriculamentis nocturnis, quae hominum mortem solent protendere* (Cologne, 1598), 18-19.

²⁰⁷ I. Moreira, *Heaven's Purge: Purgatory in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 89.

it posited the existence of only one place of purging.²⁰⁸ Despite this, the idea of double Purgatories was present in the early modern period. Both Petrus Thyraeus (1546-1601) and Noel Taillepied, two of the most notable Catholic experts on ghosts, mentioned it. Thyraeus wrote that alongside an underground Purgatory, 'by the special providence and mercy of God they have certain other places, in addition to this, wherein they are cleansed'.²⁰⁹ Taillepied elaborated on the locations where this purging might occur:

Now beside this realm of Purgatory it sometimes pleases the hidden counsels of God that for certain mysterious reasons disembodied souls endure their Purgatory either among mountains or in waters, or in valleys, or in houses, and particularly are they attached to those spots where on earth they sinned and offended God.²¹⁰

We can observe two clear types of location here. One was on the edge of human habitation within liminal topographies. The other was the site of memory, the place of the crime, a location associated with the sinner in life or with their death. This idea of double Purgatory was evident in the 1323-4 account of the ghost of Guy in Alès in southern France, which was originally recounted to the Dominican prior Jean Gobi. The spirit told Gobi that during the day he suffered in the 'common Purgatory' under the earth while at night he was confined to this 'individual Purgatory' in the bedroom of his widow.²¹¹ It was a belief that Protestants were aware of in the seventeenth century. The works of the German occultist Agrippa von Nettesheim (1486-1535), published in English in 1651, noted how certain sites, by dint of 'some hellish nature of the place', were 'fit for the punishing or purging of souls'.²¹² Johann Moscherosch (1601-1669), a German statesman and satirist who often wrote under the pseudonym of Philander von Sittewalt, described 'poor souls which are either held in Purgatory or placed on this world for their Purgatory (until their punishment is expiated or they are helped through prayers'.²¹³

²⁰⁸ Caciola, *Afterlives*, 293; Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 151.

²⁰⁹ Thyraeus, *Loca*, 18-9.

²¹⁰ Taillepied, *Treatise*, 148.

²¹¹ Caciola, *Afterlives*, 292; Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 180.

²¹² Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, *Three Books of Occult Philosophy written by Henry Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim; Translated out of the Latin into the English tongue by J.F.* (London, 1651), 489.

²¹³ Johann Michael Moscherosch, *Philander von Sittewalt/ Visionum oder Gesichter ... Siebender und letzter Theil. Das ist: Seltzame Wunderbarliche/ Visiones, Formen, Gesichter/ und leibliche Gestalt. Philanders von Sittewalt/ In welchen er nach tödtlichem Hintritt seinem Freund/ und eyß-Gesellen Experto Roberto erschienen ...: Sampt wunderlichen Discursen und Historien/ von Gespensten/ Apparitionen und Erscheinungen der Geister auch Hexenwerckern* (Frankfurt, 1654), 222. 'arme Seelen/ welche im Fegfewer noch begriffen/ oder ihnen auff dieser Welt das Fegfewer (biß sie ihre Straff gebüsset/ oder ihnen durch Gebett geholffen) bestellet'.

The damned could also be punished in situ, in a place of memory and liminality. Johann Wier (1515-1588), an early critic of witch-hunting, recorded that spirits that claimed to be souls 'do not reveal themselves in places where there are no human beings, at least not for the purpose of deliverance'.²¹⁴ Thyraeus stated that, 'the pains of Hell are endured in more than one place' and that though 'there is one spot which may claim for itself this right before all others...but for the present, Almighty God has more than just this one in which he exacts punishment from the damned according to their deserts'.²¹⁵

Mountains had a long tradition of association with the dead in Germanic cultures. Fairies and dwarves, who lived in mountains and mounds, have been recognised as avatars of the dead in northern Europe and the British Isles.²¹⁶ The legend of King Herla in England and Wales, who was invited underground by a dwarven king, from which he emerged three hundred years later was one example of this.²¹⁷ The children of Hameln were led into the mountain by the Pied Piper in the famous tale. Interestingly, the French abbot Augustin Calmet (1672-1757), writing in 1746, noted how that mountain, called the Kopfelberg, was a site of public execution.²¹⁸ Nancy Caciola noted how one of the motifs for the afterlife 'as a civilisation within a mountain' was an ancient Germanic belief that had been Christianised during the middle ages when Purgatory was imagined inside a mountain.²¹⁹ In the literary tradition the Hörselberg or Seelenberg, close by Eisenach in Thuringia, was one such place associated with the dead. Stories linked to the mountain included the medieval German tale of an English noblewoman whose husband had appeared to her after his death to tell her that it was the site of his purgation and that she should build a chapel there.²²⁰ Other stories claimed that

²¹⁴ Johann Wier, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors in the Renaissance: De Praestigiis Daemonum*, trans. J. Shea (Binghamton, NY: New York State University Press, 1991), 40.

²¹⁵ Thyraeus, *Loca*, 18-19.

²¹⁶ C. Lecouteux, *Encyclopedia of Norse and Germanic Folklore, Mythology, and Magic* (Rochester, VT: Hidden Traditions, 2016), 75; Caciola, *Afterlives*, 154, 172.

²¹⁷ Lecouteux, *Encyclopedia*, 134; A. Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories: An Anthology of Miracles, Marvels and Prodigies* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2006), 87-9.

²¹⁸ George Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World discovered: Or, a Choice Collection of modern Relations, proving ... that there are Devils, Spirits, Witches, and Apparitions ... To which is added, that marvellous History of Major Weir and his Sister, etc* (Edinburgh, 1789), 109; Augustin Calmet, *The Phantom World: Concerning Apparitions and Vampires (Traité sur les Apparitions et sur les Vampires)* with an Introduction by Gillian Bennett (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2001), 123.

²¹⁹ Caciola, *Afterlives*, 53-4, 149, 151, 204.

²²⁰ Anon, *Alte und Neue Thüringische Chronicka Oder curieuse Beschreibung Der Vornehmsten Städte, Residentzen, Dörffer, Clöster, Märckte und Flüsse In der Landgraffschafft Thüringen: Samt allen vorgefallenen Friedens- und Kriegs-Begebenheiten, Wasser- und Feuer-Schäden, Contagion, &c*, (Leipzig, 1729), 354.

the emperor Friedrich slept under the mountain.²²¹ Johannes Praetorius described how the locals would often hear a wretched howling, mindless crying and the clanging of chains.²²² It was from this mountain, at night-time, that the *Wütende Heer*, a host of spirits which at times was understood to be the dead, was believed to emerge and roam the countryside and forests. We shall examine this army more closely later.

Catholicism had appropriated these liminal places and sites of memory, effectively transforming them into features in a landscape of punishment, repentance and charity. What had led to a person becoming a ghost and being placed in these sites was a sharp reminder to abide by the standards of the Church and community. The measures to protect one from the denizens of these places and speed the salvation of those souls, in turn, reaffirmed the power and the authority of the institutions and authorities which sanctioned them. The landscape itself became a didactic and pastoral device, one that would be encountered repeatedly alongside the tales located within it. The spirits that ended up in these bleak, liminal places did so because they had refused charity in life and it was only through the giving of charity by the living, in the form of spiritual suffrages, that these spirits could be released, if at all. The popular belief in Whinny-moore that persisted into the seventeenth century in Yorkshire, possibly as a survival of medieval preaching tropes, was a powerful example of this, though one more focused on the journey of the soul as opposed to punishment in place without hope of reprieve.²²³ The afterlife journey depicted was studded by stages, where the

²²¹ Johannes Praetorius, *Anthropodemvs Plvtonicvs, Das ist, Eine Neue Welt-beschreibung Von allerley Wunderbahren Menschen, Als da seyn, Die 1. Almännergen, Schröteln, Nachtmähren. 2. Bergmännerlein, Wichtelin, Unter-Irrdische. 3. Chymische Menschen, Wettermännlein. 4. Drachenkinder, Elben. 5. Erbildete Menschen, Seulleute. 6. Feuermänner, Irrwische, Tücke-bolde. 7. Gestorbene Leute, Wütendes Heer. 8. Haußmänn[n]er, Kobolde, Gütgen. 9. Indianische Abentheur. 10. Kielkröpfe, Wechselbälge. 11. Luftleute, Windmenschen. 12. Mond-Leute, Seleniten. 13. Nixen, Syrenen. 14. Oceänische oder Seemänner. 15. Pflantzleute, Alraunen. 16. Qual- oder Verdam[m]te-Menschen. 17. Riesen, Hünen. 18. Steinmänner. 19. Thierleute, Bestialische, Weerwölfe. 20. Verwündschte Leute. 21. Waldmänner, Satyren. 22. Zwerge, Dümeken / Auctore M. Johanne Praetorio Zetlingâ-Palæo-Marchitâ, P.L.C. (Magdeburg, 1666/7), 351-3; Johannes Praetorius, *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung / Oder Ausführlicher Geographischer Bericht / von den hohen trefflich alt- und berühmten Blockes-Berge: ingeleichen von der Hexenfahrt / und Zauber-Sabbathe / so auff solchen Berge die Unholden aus gantz Teutschland / Jährlich den 1. Maij in Sanct-Walpurgis Nacht anstellen sollen. Aus vielen Autoribus abgefasset / und mit schönen Raritäten angeschmücket sampt zugehörigen Figuren / von M. JOHANNE PRÆTORIO, Poëtâ Laureatô Casareô. Nebenst einen Appendice vom Blockes-Berge / wie auch des Alten Reinstains / und der Baumans Höle am Hartz.* (Leipzig, 1669), 13-15.*

²²² Praetorius, *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung*, 13-15.

²²³ John Aubrey, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme: By John Aubrey, R.S.S. 1686-87. Edited and Annotated by James Britten, F.L.S.* (London: The Folk-lore Society, 1881), 31-2.

giving of charity in life, namely 'hosen', 'shun', 'Milke or Drinke' determined the ease with which one could progress to heaven.

The connection between place and length of purging or punishment was a key component of the Purgatorial matrix. Time was the unit in which punishment was measured and which was commuted by the grace accumulated within the Church. Some of the medieval literary and devotional legends which persisted into the early modern period included the nightingale which spoke to a man near Basel to tell him that 'he was a damned soul and must stay in that place until the Last Day'.²²⁴ Another famous medieval legend was that of a charcoal burner in a forest who over three nights witnessed a rider chasing a woman and each time throwing her into a burning oven once he caught her. The rider told the witness that they were condemned to repeat this, in situ, for all eternity for their mutual crimes.²²⁵

Stories tying punishment to a specific place and term of time were still found in early modern Protestant texts, in a time when Protestants, in theory, should have known better. Joseph Glanvill (1636-1680), the ghost story collector, recorded the case of a spectre of a man in Ireland who had been taken away by the fairies.²²⁶ When asked about his condition, he answered:

I have been dead said the Spectre or Ghost, seven years, and you know that I lived a loose life. And ever since have I been hurried up and down in a restless condition with the company you saw and shall be to the day of Judgement.²²⁷

The spirit of Robert Eliot which appeared to Isabel Binnington in 1662, claimed that he had been murdered in that house fourteen years before. It told her 'Fourteen years have I wandered in this place, suffering wrong three times, and seven years I have to wander, twenty

²²⁴ Michael Freud, *Gewissens-Fragen Oder Gründlicher Bericht Von Zauberey und Zauberern/ Von Mitteln wider dieselbe/ Und was für einen Process Christliche Obrigkeit wider die Zauberer gebrauchen solle: Benebenst einem Anhang Von Geist- und Leiblicher Besetzung und Außtreibung deß bösen Geistes* (Frankfurt am Main, 1671), 72. 'er wäre eine Seel eines verdämbten Menschen/ und müste biß an den jungsten Tag an dem Ort bleiben'; Thomas Bromhall, *An History of Apparitions, Oracles, Prophecies, and Predictions with Dreams, Visions, and Revelations and the cunning Delusions of the Devil, to strengthen the Idolatry of the Gentiles, and the Worshipping of Saints departed* (London, 1658), 41.

²²⁵ Martín Del Río, *Denckwürdige Historien. So ausz unterschiedlichen bewerthen Authoribus führnemblich Martino Delrio Societet Jesu Priestern inn seinen Disquisitionibus Magicis zu sammen gezogen/ unnd nachgedruckt worden* (Oberglogau, 1642), 20-21.

²²⁶ Joseph Glanvill, *Sadducismus Triumphatus: Or, A full and plain Evidence, concerning Witches and Apparitions. In Two Parts. The First Treating of their Possibility. The Second of their Real Existence* (London, 1726), 356-9.

²²⁷ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 358.

one years is my time'.²²⁸ Interestingly, it appeared to her in green, a colour often associated with the fairies and was barefooted and without a hat.²²⁹ This possibly reflected its history as the ghost of one murdered for their wealth but was also suggestive of a poor soul, in need of charity, and without the garb necessary for a proper journey.

Time, place, and possibly survivals of Purgatorial sentencing, were also apparent in stories of exorcisms where spirits were confined to a certain location for a set number of years. Most usually, in the English tradition, they were banished to the Red Sea.²³⁰ In Addison's comic play, *The Drummer*, when the services of a cunning man were required, it was mentioned that:

If he can once compass him, and get him in Lobs-Pound, he'll make nothing of him but speak a few hard Words to him, and perhaps bind him over to his good Behaviour, for a Thousand Years...If the conjurer be but well paid, he'll take pains upon the ghost, and lay him, look ye, in the Red Sea-and then he's laid for ever.²³¹

In July 1680, the house of John Thomas Junior in the parish of St. Sepulchres in London was troubled by apparitions of 'Ratts, Puppets, and Boys', some clad in 'strange manner of Garbs', others with 'bloody Knives in their Hands'. It was learnt from the neighbours that the house was haunted by spirits 'about a dozen years ago, and the Spirits been laid for a time, which, it seems, is now expired, which caused them to appear again'.²³²

Spirits which had been exorcised in Catholic times could also prove troublesome when either their term of confinement finished or if they had been tied to a specific place as a condition of the exorcism rite. Near Northampton, at Hannington, a ghost appeared at Old Pell's House in 1675 to a man called Clark. It was the spirit of one murdered two hundred and sixty-seven

²²⁸ Anon, *A Strange and Wonderfull Discovery of a horrid and cruel Murther committed fourteen years since upon the Person of Robert Eliot, of London, at Great Driffield in the East-Riding of the County of York discovered in September last by the frequent Apparitions of a Spirit in several Shapes and Habits unto Isabel Binnigton, the Wife of William Binnigton, the now Inhabitants in the House where this most execrable Murther was committed : Together with a Discourse that passed between the Spirit and the said Isabel Binnigton after its first appearing / Taken upon Oath at the Examination of the said Isabel, before Sir Thomas Rennington, Knight, and Thomas Crompton, Esq., two of His Majesties Justices of Peace for that Riding, Septemb. 2, 1662.* (London, 1662), 4.

²²⁹ Anon, *Strange and Wonderfull Discovery*, 3.

²³⁰ T. Brown, 'Some Examples of Post-Reformation Folklore in Devon', *Folklore*, 72:2 (1961), 397; J. Simpson and J. Westwood, *The Lore of the Land: A Guide to England's Legends, from Spring-heeled Jack to the Witches of Warboys* (London: Penguin, 2005), 398-9.

²³¹ Addison, *Drummer*, 22.

²³² Anon, *A Most Strange and Dreadful Apparition of several Spirits & Visions at several times seen and spoken to, on the 14, 15, and 16th of this instant July, 1680, at the House of Mr. John Thomas, Junior, next Door to the Sign of the Crown, at Cow Cross, in the Parish of St. Sepulchres, London ...: with many more Circumstances not here related, but will be certainly justified for Truths, by the (credible) Spectators* (London, 1680), 5.

years before which had been 'bound down by the Magical Art of a certain Fryer...for two hundred and fifty [years], during which time he was confined from appearing on earth'. However, as 'now the same time being expired', he 'was come and resolved this man should do what he desired'.²³³ In Germany, in the Catherinestrasse in Leipzig, there was the story of an evil spirit that had been conjured into a glass by a monk and then hidden in the monastery's well. The story was clearly located at the site of the former monastery and well, where the Eichhold house now stood. When the monastery was torn down, the well was searched and the glass with the spirit found. It was reburied at the corner of the bastion of the Halle gate, but since then a three-legged donkey would haunt the street.²³⁴ The Tyrolean renegade, Prussian courtier and ghost story collector, Otto von Graben zum Stein (1690-1756), writing almost a century later, recounted how this story was still well known, and the beast still seen between eleven and twelve at night.²³⁵

It does raise the issue of the persistence of Purgatorial modes of thinking long after it had been officially debunked and the economy of the sacred associated with it severely restricted in Protestant territories. One wonders what dictated the span of a haunting. It could be until the specific wish of the ghost had been granted. It could also be the length of time taken for the body to decompose. It might correspond to what was imagined to be the full length of natural life, one the person had been denied by their premature death.²³⁶ However, in certain cases, as mentioned, it seems to be a term of time the soul had to endure at a specific place, similar to the length of sentence found in earlier Purgatorial spirit tales.

²³³ William Clark, *The Rest-less Ghost, or, Wonderful news from Northamptonshire and Southwark being a most true and perfect Account of a Persons Appearance that was murdered above two hundred and fifty years ago : First about three weeks since, to one William Clarke at Hennington in Northhampton-shire, whom it appointed to meet in Southwark, and did there appear to him again, and several others on Sunday last, the 10th of this instant January : Where it discovered a great Parcel of Money, and some Writings buried in the Ground, which were disposed off by his Order, and then seeming satisfied it disappeared: This Relation is taken from the said Will. Clarks own Mouth who came to London on Purpose, and will be attested and justified by Will. Stubbins, Iohn Charlton, and John Steven, to be spoken with any Day, at the Castle Inn without Smith Field-Barrs, and many others.* (London, 1675), 6.

²³⁴ Johannes Praetorius, *Daemonologia Rubinzalii silesii. Das ist/ Ein ausführlicher Bericht/ Von den wunderbarlichen/ sehr Alten/ und weit-beschrienen Gespenste Dem Rübezahl: Welches sich/ auf den Gebirgen in Schlesien und Böhmen/ den Wanders-Leuten zum öfftern ... erzeiget / ... gäntzlich aus vielen Scribenten erstlich zusammen gezogen durch M. Johannem Praetorium, Zetlingensem, Poetam Coronatum Caes.* (Leipzig, 1662-73), 223.

²³⁵ Otto von Graben zum Stein, *Die Sagen Der Monathlichen Unterredungen Otto von Grabens Zum Stein: herausgegeben von Will-Erich Peuckert* (Berlin: Gruyter, 1961), 82.

²³⁶ Psalms 90. 10.

Walking Spirits and Place

In early modern England ghosts were often called 'walking spirits'.²³⁷ In Germany, the same term existed, apparent in the title of texts such as Johann Schütz's *Ob wandelnde Geister in der Irr umbgehen* (1583), or in the novelist and polymath Eberhard Happel's (1647-1690) description of a ghost as 'you who wanders the whole night, incapable of rest'.²³⁸ Daniel Defoe (1660-1731), the English novelist and journalist, described how they gained this sobriquet:

This is what our People vulgarly call Walking; and when any such thing appears, they know not what otherwise to call it, they say Something walks; And if it be the appearance of any unknown Person lately dead, they say Such a one walks.²³⁹

By understanding the direction and focus of the walking, we may be able to achieve a deeper comprehension of the spirit itself. We have already encountered Aubrey's account of the belief in seventeenth-century Yorkshire of a journey to the afterlife, with the dead setting off across the Whinny-Moore and negotiating the Brig O' Dread and then the fires of Purgatory before reaching heaven.²⁴⁰ There was also the story of the Dutch prisoner of war, captured after the battle of Lowestoft in 1665 and brought to Woodbridge in Suffolk, who had the ability to see ghosts and saw the spirit of a tailor set off purposefully down the street a few minutes after he had died.²⁴¹ In these cases, the dead were doing what was expected of them. They were leaving this world and going to another place. Likewise, we also have medieval ghost stories of armies of the dead, making their way across the country, pilgrim fashion, to a set destination where their fate would be resolved.²⁴² The walking spirits under question

²³⁷ Marshall, *Beliefs*, 254; Johann Schütz, *Ob wandelnde Geister in der Irr umbgehen* (1583).

²³⁸ Eberhard Werner Happel, *Der Academische Roman* (Ulm, 1690), 520. 'das du die ganze Nacht wandelst/ und keiner Ruhe fähig bist/ auch andere unschuldige Leute nicht kannst ruhen lassen'.

²³⁹ Andrew Moreton/ Daniel Defoe, *The Secrets of the Invisible World Disclos'd: Or, An Universal History of Apparitions sacred and prophane, under all Denominations; Whether, angelical, diabolical, or Human Souls departed. Shewing I. Their various Returns to this World; with sure Rules to know, by their Manner of Appearing, if they are Good or Evil ones. II. The Differences of the Apparitions of Ancient and Modern Times; and an Enquiry into the Scriptural Doctrine of Spirits. III. The many Species of Apparitions, their real Existence, and Operations by Divine Appointment. IV. The Nature of seeing Ghosts before, and after, Death; and how we should behave towards them. V. The Effects of Fancy, Vapours, Dreams, Hyppo, and of real, or imaginary Appearances. VI. A Collection of the most Authentic Relations of Apparitions, particularly that surprising One attested by the learned Dr. Scott. By Andrew Moreton, Esq;* (London, 1740), 16.

²⁴⁰ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 31-32.

²⁴¹ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 355-6.

²⁴² Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 39-44, 66-73.

here were different. They were clearly not journeying to a specific destination. Instead, they were stuck, wandering in the same places, as in the case Henry Bourne cited when he wrote that 'Apparitions have been seen oftner than once in the same place', which 'have no doubt been the rise and spring of the walking places of spirits'.²⁴³

It is tempting to see these perambulations as replicating forms of earlier piety, or in Catholic areas, affirming the power of certain sites and associated practices. Medieval armies of the dead resembled pilgrimages in their collective and penitential nature and their destinations. Otto von Graben zum Stein related the tale of a ghostly monk in Prague that would, between the 1st November and 21st December, emerge from the gates of the Mount Sion monastery on a three-legged horse and go as far as the Wenceslas church, before returning.²⁴⁴ There was also the trope of the mass of the dead, where spirits would gather in churches, one we will look at soon.

This was in stark contrast to how Protestant authorities denounced such walking spirits. The demonological writer Richard Bovet (b.1641) mocked Catholic belief in purgatorial spirits, asking 'What ail those thousands of sad souls to ramble up and down the World, since the time of Pope Gregory, but to reveal Purgatory and recommend Mass for the dead'.²⁴⁵ These attempts to portray a directionless, malevolent entity chimed with Scripture. In 1 Peter 5. 8, Christians were warned to 'be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour'. In Job 2. 2, when asked whence he came, 'Satan answered the Lord, and said, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it'. Henry Bourne, in his 1725 work which echoed Matthew 12. 43, denounced ghosts as 'the roaring lion, and his instruments who wander to and fro in the Earth; these unclean Spirits who wander through dry Places, seeking rest and finding none'.²⁴⁶ Instead of souls, they were the fallen hosts of Lucifer.

²⁴³ Bourne, *Antiquitates*, 85.

²⁴⁴ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 132-3.

²⁴⁵ Richard Bovet, *Pandaemonium, or, The Devil's Cloyster being a further Blow to modern Sadduceism, proving the Existence of Witches and Spirits, in a Discourse deduced from the Fall of the Angels, the Propagation of Satans Kingdom before the Flood, the Idolatry of the Ages after greatly advancing diabolical Confederacies, with an Account of the Lives and Transactions of several notorious Witches : Also, a Collection of several authentick Relations of strange Apparitions of Daemons and Spectres, and Fascinations of Witches, never before printed / by Richard Bovet* (London, 1684), 145.

²⁴⁶ Bourne, *Antiquitates*, 39.

However, in the same text, Bourne did admit that ‘the common people say now and then, such a place is dangerous to be pass’d through at night, because a Spirit walks there’ and that ‘there are particular places allotted to Spirits to walk in’.²⁴⁷ Furthermore, in a statement that had close parallels to Catholic thinking on double Purgatories, Henry Bourne, 200 years after Luther admitted

it is received tradition among the Vulgar, that at the time of cock-crowing, the Midnight Spirits forsake those lower regions, and go to their proper places. They wander, say they, about the world, from the dead hour of Night, when all things are buried in sleep and darkness, till the time of cock-crowing, and then they depart. Hence it is, that in Country-Places, where the way of life requires more early labour, they always go cheerfully to work at that time; whereas if they are called abroad earlier, they are apt to imagine everything they see or hear, to be a wandring Ghost.²⁴⁸

In both Catholic and popular Protestant belief, spirits ‘walked’ the same places of liminality and memory. Though dispute might lie on the identity of the entity that wandered there, the fact that they wandered the same places highlighted the convergence in anxieties regarding these locations. Graben zum Stein mentioned the belief in Dresden that a spectral monk would wander the city at night, ‘carrying a lantern in his hand and his head under his arm’.²⁴⁹ The street was a liminal zone, even more so at night. It was a place as the tale suggested, best avoided at that time.

Spirits of the Wilds

Isaiah 13. 20-22 and 34. 11-15 were the most recurrent texts dealing with the Protestant encounter with spirits in the landscape. Whereas in the proximity of man, the Devil would assume the shape of the dead to deceive humanity, in the wilds, he and his minions could reveal their real forms. Early modern texts saw the satanic in the wild and viewed the forests, mountains, caves and watery places as places where these demons dwelt. Ruins and former sites of habitation were places where the Devil was frequently seen, as he revelled in the short lives of men whose downfall he had engineered. The fear and unease of liminal

²⁴⁷ Bourne, *Antiquitates*, 84.

²⁴⁸ Bourne, *Antiquitates*, 37-38.

²⁴⁹ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 83-5. ‘welcher eine Laterne in der Hand und seinen Kopf unterm Arm tragen soll’.

topography were explained by the presence of the demons, whose habitat that place was, rather than the lingering souls of men. The early modern binary world, capturing the greater cosmological struggle between good and evil, was delineated physically between the realm of man and civilisation and that of the wild. The ruins testified to the victories the Devil had won and where the forces of disorder had overrun man's attempts to impose order on the universe.

The Catholic demonologist, Francesco Guazzo (b.1570), described how

some of the devils dwell in woods and forests, and lay snares for hunters: some dwell in the fields and lead nightfarers astray: others dwell in hidden places and caverns: while others delight to live in secret with men.²⁵⁰

The wastes of Tartary were infamous for the devils that haunted them where one could often see or hear them in the air like the sound of drumming or musical instruments.²⁵¹ The wild Faeroe Islands, largely 'uninhabited during so many hundred years... have been nothing but an habitation of Devils, a Domicill for unclean spirits, and a Den of Goblins' according to the Danish pastor and topographer, Lucas Debes Jacobsen (1623-1675).²⁵² Closer at hand, in the Giant Mountains along the borders of Silesia and Bohemia, Rübezahl was one notorious spirit believed to live there. At times playful, at times dangerous, Rübezahl was a regional tutelary spirit whose fame spread in print, notably in the works of Johannes Praetorius (1630-1680).²⁵³ Meanwhile, in England, Shakespeare famously wrote of Herne the Hunter of Windsor Forest, a tale 'Receiv'd, and did deliver to our age...for a truth'. He described how

Sometime a keeper here in Windsor Forest/ Doth all the winter-time,
at still midnight/ Walk round about an oak, with great ragg'd horns;/
And there he blasts the tree, and takes the cattle/ And makes milch-
kine yield blood, and shakes a chain/ In a most hideous and dreadful
manner.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁰ Francesco Maria Guazzo, *Compendium Maleficarum: The Montague Summers Edition* (Mineola, NY: 1988), 73.

²⁵¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 499-500; Bromhall, *History*, 54-5.

²⁵² Lucas Debes Jacobsen, *Faeroae & Faeroa reserata, that is, A Description of the Islands & Inhabitants of Foeroe being seventeen Islands subject to the King of Denmark, lying under 62 deg. 10 min. of North Latitude: wherein several Secrets of Nature are brought to Light, and some Antiquities hitherto kept in Darkness discovered / Written in Danish by Lucas Jacobson Debes; Englished by J.S.; Illustrated with Maps* (London, 1676), 376.

²⁵³ Praetorius, *Daemonologia*.

²⁵⁴ *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, IV. 4. 27-33.

The metaphor of Satan as a cunning fowler and huntsman found more resonance in the wilds where he could hunt man on his home turf.²⁵⁵ James VI (1566-1625) wrote 'The cause whie they haunt soltarie places, it is by reason, that they may affraie and brangle the more the faith of suche as them alone haunts such places'.²⁵⁶ They were places of real physical fear, where murder, rape and robbery could be and had been committed, unseen by an otherwise watchful society. Erasmus Francisci described how the devil would haunt 'lonely and unwalked places' to create fear, terror and despair.²⁵⁷ Suicide was one such temptation in places where one was far from the gaze of others and where trees, chasms or rivers offered the means to a quick end.²⁵⁸ Those suicides would then often be buried in those same places without the burial rites afforded members of the community.

Scripturally, the wilds had been a place of temptation and struggle. It was the place where hermits and holy men had gone to wrestle with the Devil. Other monks, notably the Cistercians, had gone there too, to tame and cultivate it. It was the wilds and deserts that the people of Israel had passed through on their flight from Egypt and where they had fallen victim to the temptations of idolatry. It was in the wilds where Christ had faced two of his temptations. It was claimed that during his forty days in the desert, Christ was taunted by larvae and hell-beasts.²⁵⁹ In Matthew 4. 4-11, Christ affirmed the Word of God as the bread of life. He had ignored Satan's urging to cast himself from the pinnacle of the temple and had dismissed the offer of the glory and power of this world. These directly mirrored the temptations spirits held in the wild. They turned man from the Word and instead, through fear and terror, drove him to rely on idolatry to protect himself against the devil, just as the Roman Church did. They drove men to suicide in forests, rivers and off precipices. Finally, they offered the lure of wealth and power, of hidden treasure and swag, for the price of one's soul.

²⁵⁵ Proverbs 6.5.

²⁵⁶ James VI, *Daemonologie, in Forme of a Dialogue diuided into three Bookes* (Edinburgh, 1597), 58.

²⁵⁷ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 865-866. 'einsamen und unbewandelten Orten'.

²⁵⁸ Aegidius Albertinus, *Lucifers Königreich und Seelengejäd: Oder Narrenhatz: In acht Theil abgetheilt. Im Ersten wirdt beschriben Lucifers Königreich/ Macht/ Gewalt/ Hofhaltung/ Hofgesind/ Officier und Diener/ die Hoffertigen/ Ehrgeitigen unnd Fürwitzigen. II. Die Geitzhälß/ Wuecherer/ Simonisten/ Rauber/ [et]c. III. Die Fresser/ Sauffer/ Schwelger/ und Störtzer. IV. Die Bueler/ Hurer/ Ehebrecher/ [et]c. V. Die Neydhälß/ Ehrndieb/ Leut an einander Knüpfper. VI. Die feindtselige/ zornige Martialische Haderkatzen/ Tyrannen und Rachgirigen. VII. Die träge/ faule/ lawe/ schläferige ... Gesellen. Im letzten wirdt das Orth der Verdampften beschriben ... / Durch Aegidium Albertinum, Fürstl: Durchl: in Bayrn Secretarium, zusammen getragen* (Munich, 1617), 5.

²⁵⁹ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 77.

These were three themes closely associated with ghosts, in the place ghosts and spirits were often seen.

The obvious temptation such apparitions posed for stout Protestants was that which Catholicism had fallen for. Namely, they would be tempted to believe that it was the soul of the deceased rather than the devil in their form wandering around the forest.²⁶⁰ Souls of the damned, rather than souls undergoing Purgatory were more likely to be encountered in forests according to traditional belief. Any pleas such a soul might have would go unanswered in the vast wilderness of a forest, home instead to myriad demons and nature spirits. They might also be chased by a huntsman, a trope found in medieval sources.²⁶¹ The sighting of 'certain known damned souls appearing in the forests in this shape and such hunts testifying to their unrest', would only sow confusion among those who witnessed it.²⁶² Instead, it was all the work of the Devil to frighten and confuse the living.²⁶³

There was a strong tradition of the Devil as a hunter coursing the woods, just as the spirits in Isaiah 13. 21-22 roamed the wilds. Francisci admitted that the *Wütende Heer*, or trope of a spirit army led by the Loyal Eckard, was no longer specific to the host that emerged from the Seelenberg in Thuringia but was more associated with the trope of the devil hunting the forests with 'hunting cries and the barking of hounds'.²⁶⁴ There were numerous legends and accounts of being in the forest at night featuring the dreadful encounter with the Wild Hunt and the demonic huntsman. In Johann Beer's (1655-1700) *German Winter Nights*, the hero shuddered when he heard a horn in the woods at night, fearing 'it was the Evil One because there are examples of such hunts by him often and on serious occasions'.²⁶⁵ Erasmus Francisci claims to have stayed in a hostelry one night in a forest and heard the hunt and been told the next morning by the landlord that it was always heard around the new moon.²⁶⁶ In 1626,

²⁶⁰ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 527. "wann er sich / in eines Verstorbenen Gestalt / dabey sehen lässt / mit falscher Einbildung / es sey der Verstorbene selbst / der also in den Wäldern herumgeheth / und jagt / betriege".

²⁶¹ Joyes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 52-3, 207-11.

²⁶² Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 548. 'gewisse verbannte Seelen der Verstorbenen / in den Wäldern dieser Gestalt erscheinen / und durch solches Jagen ihre Unruhe bezeugen'.

²⁶³ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 529.

²⁶⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 526. 'Unter dem wütenden Heer / versteht Mancher insonderheit den gespenstischen Aufzug deß so genannten Treuen Eckards / insgemein aber meynt man / heutiges Tages / damit das Jagt-Geschrey und Gebell der Hunde / so der Teufel / manches Mal / bey Nacht / in den Wäldern / anrichtet. Und in dieser letzten Bedeutung / ist es zu nehmen / was ich jetzt erzehle'.

²⁶⁵ Beer, *German Winter Nights*, 67.

²⁶⁶ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 529.

Juncker Rudolff von Schmertzig was supposed to have encountered a hunt on his way to Annaberg.²⁶⁷ Francisci recalled another story, set in 1640 in Bavaria when the Devil was seen coursing the woods with many of his hunters and dogs.²⁶⁸ Christian Lehmann recorded a story, set around Easter 1666 when Gottfried Richter, a local minister, went to visit his brother in another settlement. Unfortunately for him, he set off home late and had to negotiate the forest at night. He returned early the next morning, half-dead, speaking of how he had been waylaid by a ghost in the thick woods which had plagued him during the night. He died a few days later.²⁶⁹

There were many tales of legendary evildoers, condemned to ride with the hunt for their sins in life. On the Danish border, the likeness of the evil Danish king Abel (1218-1252) would be seen in the forests just as King Hugo (939-996), a figure of dread for children, would be seen near Tours in France.²⁷⁰ Similarly, there was the famous legend of an evil nobleman of the Rechenberg line who stumbled across a large army coming his way. He was told that it was the *Wütende Heer* from Hell and that he would join it within a year.²⁷¹ In the Byland tales recorded around 1400 and set in the north Yorkshire landscape, there was mention of a priest condemned to haunt the moors in the shape of a hunter, blowing a horn.²⁷² Another of Francisci's tales described a former margrave of Brandenburg who 'followed the hunt so much that he was more a master of the chase than a regent'.²⁷³ One night, alone and cut off from his companions, he encountered the Wild Hunt in the forest. No longer the hunter, he became the hunted and the terror of that night stayed with him long afterwards, reminding

²⁶⁷ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 77-8.

²⁶⁸ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 549.

²⁶⁹ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 77.

²⁷⁰ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 527, 531-2.

²⁷¹ Johann Gottfried Lembach, *Historische Todes-Post, Das ist Allerhand Merckwürdige Historien von Personen unterschiedener Art ... / Aus alten und neuen Historien ... zusammen getragen und zum Druck befördert von Johann Gottfried Lembachen* (Dresden, 1687), 72-3; Bernhard Waldschmidt, *Pythonissa Endorea, Das ist: Acht und zwanzig Hexen- und Gespenstpredigten: genommen Auß der Histori von der Zauberein zu Endor/ im I. Buch Samuelis Cap. XXVIII. In welchen die Schröcklich- Greulich- und Abscheulichkeit der Zauberey-Sünde allen Christen zur treuhertigen Warnung für Augen gestellet/ auch die Materi von den Gespensten also abgehandelt wird/ Daß der Text der Histori gründlich erkläret/ die nohtwendige Lehr beneben derselben Nutzen und Gebrauch heraus genommen/ und mit darzu dienlichen Exempeln und Historien außgeführt wird / Gehalten in der Kirchen zun Barfüßern in Franckfurt/ und nunmehr mit nützlichen/ auß vornehmer Theologorum und anderer berühmten Autorum Schrifften genommenen Anmerckungen vermehret/ auff Begehren/ Umb dieser letzten Zeiten willen/ zum Druck übergeben von M. Bernhardo Waldschmidt/ Evangelischen Predigern* (Frankfurt, 1660), 486.

²⁷² M.R. James, 'Twelve Medieval Ghost-Stories', *English Historical Review*, 37: 147 (1922), 417.

²⁷³ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 540. 'er der Jagt allzusehr nachgejagt / und mehr einen Jägermeister / als Regenten /abgegeben'.

him to concentrate on the duties given to him by God rather than pleasures of the flesh.²⁷⁴ We encounter a milder form of a ghostly hunter, followed by his pack of hounds, in a 1678 English pamphlet. It was of a 'gentleman (who in his life time was much given to that sport) that was lately dead'.²⁷⁵ A satirical essay written by the Scottish Commonwealthman Thomas Gordon (1691-1750) stated that 'In the Country there are two sorts of Ghosts, a Plebeian Ghost, and a ghost of rank; and these two bear a different Figure, and have a different Behaviour'.²⁷⁶ Some of the tropes of the 'Ghost of Dignity', who was 'always known to be the Spirit of a former Landlord of the Parish', included following 'a Pack of Hounds all Day' while sitting 'up with another pack all Night'.²⁷⁷

As we can see, the spirits of the rural elite were often associated with the trope of riding and hunting after death and this medieval trope persisted far into the eighteenth century and indeed beyond. Apparitions of nobles were seen doing what they had done in life. It was one also closely linked to what the Devil did in the same place in forests, one that Schmitt claimed had been used in the twelfth century by clerical writers to condemn noble excess and violence.²⁷⁸ These elites were clearly being criticised for not abiding by social or religious norms and for not performing their duties. Finucane noted how 'the humbling of aristocratic pride is one of the favourite themes of all death literature'.²⁷⁹ They ignored the sanctity of the sabbath and preferred the thrill of the chase to either their own spiritual welfare or the well-being of their subjects. For the elites, such men failed in their duties as rulers. For the clergy, these men had treated the Church with flagrant contempt, unafraid of its ultimate sanctions. For the wider people, who had to endure elite abuse, not only did it remind them of what the standards of their betters should be and the social compact between rich and poor, but that ultimately there was justice for those who transgressed these bounds. Perhaps the wide

²⁷⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 541-2.

²⁷⁵ Anon, *A Strange, but True, Relation of a Most Horrid and Bloudy Murder committed on a Traveller about Thirty Years ago in the West of England* (London, 1678), 3-4.

²⁷⁶ Thomas Gordon, *The Humourist: Being Essays upon several subjects, viz. News-writers. Enthusiasm. The Spleen. Country Entertainment. Love. The History of Miss Manage. Ambition and Pride. Idleness. Fickleness of human Nature. Prejudice. Witchcraft. Ghosts and Apparitions. The Weather. Female Disguises. The Art of modern Conversation. The Use of Speech. The Punishment of Staying ... Home on Sunday, &c. Criticism. Art of Begging. Anger. Avarice. Death. Grief. Keeping the Ten Commandments. Travel misapply'd. Flattery. The Abuse of Words. Credulity. Eating. The Love of Power. The Expedients to get rid of Time. Retirement. The Story of Will. Hacket the Enthusiast. With a Dedication to the Man in the Moon. By the author of The Apology for Parson Alberoni; The Dedication to a Great Man concerning Dedications, &c* (London, 1720), 84.

²⁷⁷ Gordon, *Humourist*, 84-5.

²⁷⁸ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 99-100.

²⁷⁹ Finucane, *Appearances*, 71.

appeal of this trope, to all estates of society, explains the enduring popularity of this type of haunting.

Discerning the Spirits of Place

Many of the angels that were cast out of heaven and fell to earth alongside Lucifer were identified as those referred to in Isaiah 13 and 34. They made their homes in the wild, in rivers and swamps, forests, mountains and under the earth as well as those that dwelt in the air itself. It was these spirits and the Devil himself, rather than the souls of the dead, which were seen. This was the core of the Protestant argument which dominated German evangelical thinking in the early modern period. The landscape, above and below, was populated by a variety of fairies, sprites, dwarves, and goblins among many others.

Some, such as the dwarves (*Bergmännlein*), were often understood to be of flesh and blood. This was the opinion of the Frankfurt-born writer Johann Jacob Bräuner, who described them as of 'flesh and blood and bone, but no soul, as Christ did not die for them'.²⁸⁰ Others were spirits who could change shape and appear in a variety of forms including those of humans and animals. The Annaberg Mine spirit appeared in the shape of a horse and water spirits were able to 'take the shape of various animals'.²⁸¹ A lake near Cracow, which couldn't be fished, was home to a terrible monster that had a goat's head and fiery eyes.²⁸² They were also, like early modern ghosts, capable of violence. The Annaberg Mine spirit was blamed for

²⁸⁰ Bräuner, *Physicalisch- und Historisch-Erörterte Curiositæten*, 192. 'Die Geist-Menschen haben Fleisch und Blut, under Bein, aber keine Seele, darum auch Christus für sie nicht gestorben'.

²⁸¹ Wier, *Witches*, 73; Albertinus, *Lucifers Königreich*, 6. "nemmen sie die Gestalt underschidlicher Thieren an sich".

²⁸² Johann Weikhard von Valvasor, *Die Ehre Deß Hertzogthums Crain: Das ist/ Wahre/ gründliche/ und recht eigentliche Gelegen- und Beschaffenheit dieses/ in manchen alten und neuen Geschicht-Büchern zwar rühmlich berührten/ doch bishero nie annoch recht beschriebenen Römisch-Keyserlichen herrlichen Erblandes : Anjetzo/ Vermittelst einer vollkommenen und ausführlichen Erzehlung aller seiner Landschafften/ ... deß Welt-berühmten Cirknitzer Wunder-Sees/ ... ungemeiner Natur-Wunder/ imgleichen der Gewächse/ Mineralien/ Bergwercke/ Edelgesteine/ alter Müntz-Stücken/ Thiere/ ... auch der Gebiete/ Herrschafften/ Schlösser/ Städte/ Märckten/ ... Einwohner/ Sprachen/ Sitten/ Trachten/ Gewerben/ Handthierungen/ Religion/ ... wie auch der Lands-Fürsten/ Jahr-Geschichte/ alter und neuer Denckwürdigkeiten / Durch selbst-eigene/ gantz genaue/ Erkündigung/ Untersuchung/ Erfahrung/ und Historisch-Topographische Beschreibung/ In Funffzehnen/ wiewol in vier Haupt-Theile unterschiedenen/ Büchern/ wie auch häufigen Abrissen und zierlichen Kupffer-Figuren/ ausgebreitet/ von Johann Weichard Valvasor/ Freyherrn ... Aber In reines Teutsch gebracht/ auch/ auf Begehren/ mit manchen beyfügigen Erklärungen ... erweitert durch Erasmus Francisci/ Deß Hochgräfl Hauses Hohenloh und Gleichen Raht. (Laibach, 1689), 198.*

a blast that killed 12 workmen in Rosy Crown Mine.²⁸³ Christian Lehmann recorded a forest demon that poisoned and killed three charcoalers on separate occasions near Müntzerberg in the years 1575, 1578 and 1582, making 'the forests over Blöselstein and on the Müntzerberg very uncanny'.²⁸⁴ He also noted that in 1632, Georg Feuereisen was attacked at midday at a waterhole as he went to fetch drinking water. An unknown, ugly man fell on him and beat him black and blue. Lehmann also described how behind Grünhain there was the Pfannenstiel forest where many people were either killed, frightened or taunted by a wood spirit.²⁸⁵

The ambiguity regarding the identity of these entities, and how they were understood by the people who lived in that environment rather than people who wrote about it, dogs any study of this aspect of spirit belief. Whereas for Catholics, one could encounter the souls of the dead in the landscape, many of whom were well known to the witnesses, in the strict Protestant narrative, the local dead and human were removed and replaced with grander cosmological forces and entities. Though such spirits mirrored the Scripture more closely, it also exposed the fault lines between textual fundamentalism and indigenous European beliefs regarding place and the dead. It is complicated by our own modern prejudices, influenced by literature and cinema, which emphasise the human element of a haunting at the expense of the role fairies or nature spirits might have played.

This is then further obscured by how people in different countries and areas understood the faerie world and the extent to which the strength of belief varied depending on the specific region and local environment in question. It is also muddled by the limitations of the archive and the willingness of contemporary educated writers to record local beliefs rather than merely dismiss them as old wives' tales and papist relics. Whenever we do meet a record of popular beliefs outside the norm, it is tempting to ascribe them greater relevance and temporal and spatial distribution than they potentially might have had. It is further limited by the nature of text as a medium for recording local belief in opposition to an encounter with that place in situ. There is then the matter of blurring of tropes where different supernatural beings share the same attributes and powers or engage in the same activity even though they

²⁸³ Taillepié, *Treatise*, 81.

²⁸⁴ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 74. 'die Wälder über dem Blöselstein und am Müntzerberg sind sehr unheimlich'.

²⁸⁵ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 74-5.

may be radically different as supernatural entities. It is important to keep in mind the finding that Heonik Kwon stressed in his own work for late twentieth century Vietnam that 'displaced spirits of the dead may transform into powerful kindred spirits of a place through vigorous, generative interactions with the living inhabitants'.²⁸⁶ It is also possible that this process may apply to nature spirits becoming identified with people or souls over time.

The legend or memory of an event ascribed to a place not only involved a certain spirit associated with a place but all those who have encountered it over time. A textual encounter with a ghost or spirit is different from an actual encounter in situ with a place associated with a local legend. In the text, one encounters the same place and legend once. In situ, one encounters the same place again and again with the memories of previous encounters, one's own and others.

One case in point is that of Rübezahl, a spirit that haunted the Giant Mountains along the Bohemian and Silesian borders. Claude Lecouteux termed him a trickster mountain spirit, at times benevolent, at other times dangerous if mocked.²⁸⁷ As with many supernatural entities, he possessed tropes that demons, nature spirits and ghosts often shared. His potential human origins are of main interest here. Johannes Praetorius claimed that one of the most frequent guises of this entity was that of a monk.²⁸⁸ Though there were other explanations for his origins, one of the most commonly held beliefs was that he had actually been a monk in life, a tradition which he said had survived from the days of popery.²⁸⁹ As he had dabbled in magic, 'he could not come to the Grace of God but instead must always and without break wander the Giant Mountains as his punishment'.²⁹⁰ Praetorius was content in good Protestant fashion to dismiss him as a devil, but one with a predilection for appearing in monkish garb.²⁹¹ Rübezahl was mentioned by Thomas Bromhall, the English collector of supernatural stories.

²⁸⁶ H. Kwon, *Ghosts of War in Vietnam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 102, 104.

²⁸⁷ Lecouteux, *Encyclopedia*, 234.

²⁸⁸ Praetorius, *Daemonologia*, 78, 132, 226-7, 244-6, 286.

²⁸⁹ Praetorius, *Daemonologia*, 226.

²⁹⁰ Praetorius, *Daemonologia*, 229-30. 'Wie Rübezal ein Mönch solle gewesen seyn / und wegen [230] seiner Zauberey bey Gott nicht zu Gnaden könne kommen; "bey Gott nicht zu Gnaden könne kommen; sondern immer und ohn unterlaß auff dem Riesengebirge zur Straffe müsse herumb irren'.

²⁹¹ Praetorius, *Daemonologia*, 286. Dieser Mönch oder Rübezahl ist niemands anders als der Teuffel selbst / welcher sich in eines Münchs Gestalt verkleidet / und solche Sachen fürnimpt und treibet.

He concurred with Praetorius' interpretation that 'This Monk or Rubezal is the Devill, who having taken to him the Shape of a Monk, plays these pranks'.²⁹²

At one level, we have a potential myth of origin here, one with a human origin rather than an overtly demonic one. Monks were known to set up shop in the wild, either in monasteries or as hermits. Spectral monks were also a well-known trope, in the medieval canon of ghost stories and in early modern tales too as we shall see later. Often wandering the literal and metaphorical ruins of the old Church, they were figures of contested memory. The textual medium most usually spun them as figures of memories of a darker time of superstition and clerical abuse. However, at the popular level, they were also reminders of a time of greater charity when communal values were given greater respect. This might be the case with Rübezahl, ready to help and extend charity in effect to those who respected him but equally quick to punish those who showed disrespect.

However, we should be careful. Perhaps instead of a human actor taking on the guise of a nature spirit over time, we have a case where nature was construed, and to an extent, demonised, anthropomorphically. Monks were archetypal bogeymen for Protestants, so it would be no strange thing for the Devil to wear their habit as both were intimately linked. The Devil was a trickster, a trait Rübezahl shared. The Devil was also closely linked to the wild, as this section has shown. Ultimately, it is impossible in this case to determine exact origins and the extent to which a literary tradition affected an oral one, how Protestant legends overlay Catholic ones, and indeed how a Catholic tradition may have influenced or been influenced in turn by an earlier one.

Lights in the Darkness

Lights in the countryside at night were another example of spirits in the landscape. *Irrlichter*, Will-o'-the-Wisps, Jack-o'-Lanterns and Corpse Candles were just some of the many names for the natural phenomenon known as *ignes fatui* associated with the emission of methane during the process of vegetable matter decay. Even in the early modern period, its natural provenance was accepted by many authorities and Johann Wier described how 'Fires of this

²⁹² Bromhall, *History*, 39.

kind-which are harmless and do not burn', would frequently be seen in 'moist, sticky, putrid, swampy and steamy places, such as kitchens, enclosed valleys, cemeteries, under gibbets, and wherever many corpses have rotten'.²⁹³ The prominent Puritan churchman Richard Baxter (1615-1691), noted that it was 'commonly imputed to the igneous Air of the Counties'.²⁹⁴ However, at a popular and theological level, such lights were often viewed with fear and were interpreted as either the souls of the dead, field demons or portents, most usually of death. Luminosity caused by decaying wood and 'Gloeworme...gloebearde' in Lavater's words, were often used by children to 'terrifie their playfellows that they imagine with themselves, to see evil spirits, or men al burning with fire'.²⁹⁵ In the book *Simplicissimus* (1668), the eponymous hero lost in a forest at night, ran from one rotten tree, glowing in the distance, to another, filled with terror.²⁹⁶

David Hufford emphasised that supernatural myths easily developed around actual physical experiences caused, in his own field of study, by sleep paralysis.²⁹⁷ This was also evidently the case with *Irrlichter*, and the phenomenon itself and beliefs around it, fed off each other and helped to construct its associated legends. Sometimes they would appear to hover over certain spots. Other times they would dance across the countryside, their natural glow suggestive of fires. Ludwig Lavater wrote how 'many tymes candles and small fiers appeare in the night and seeme to run up and downe' the mountainsides of his native Zurich.²⁹⁸ Erasmus Francisci also mentioned how the crackling noises these lights would sometimes emit would be interpreted by the gullible as human voices and moanings, presumably those of souls in torment.²⁹⁹

The tradition of night-time lights as the souls of the dead had a long provenance that potentially predated Christianity. In the Grettis Saga set in medieval Iceland, the hero located

²⁹³ Wier, *Witches*, 57.

²⁹⁴ Richard Baxter, *The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits Fully evinced by the Unquestionable Histories of Apparitions, Operations, Witchcrafts, Voices, &c. Proving the Immortality of Souls, the Malice and Misery of the Devils, and the Damned, and the Blessedness of the Justified. Written for the conviction of Sadduces & Infidels, by Richard Baxter.* (London, 1691), 131.

²⁹⁵ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 51.

²⁹⁶ Johann Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, *The Adventures of Simplicius Simplicissimus: Trans. and with an Introduction by Mike Mitchell* (Sawtry: Dedalus, 2012), 28.

²⁹⁷ D. J. Hufford, *The Terror That Comes in the Night: An Experience-Centered Study of Supernatural Assault Traditions* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982).

²⁹⁸ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 51.

²⁹⁹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 176.

the mound of the *draugr*, Kar the Old, by a fire visible over his barrow.³⁰⁰ Nicolas Rémy (1530-1616), the French magistrate and witch-hunter, described ‘wandering balls of fire often seen by them at night, and speaking with a human voice’ which he ascribed to witchcraft though he did admit that ‘the common opinion still holds that this is an apparition or spectre’.³⁰¹ The Puritan divine, William Fulke (1538-1589), commented on how ‘ignorant and superstitious fooles have thought’ lights seen at night in wetlands and graveyards, ‘to be soules tormented in the fire of purgatory’.³⁰² Protestant writers acknowledged that this was a Catholic belief at the start of the Reformation and was still popular two hundred years later. They were often believed to be seen in graveyards.³⁰³ The great ghostbook writer Erasmus Francisci criticised such thinking in 1690. He wrote how the belief still infected ‘quite a number of credulous and simple people’ and had changed little since the time of the Italian polymath Girolamo Cardano (1501-1576), whose own discourse on the subject, had noted how people believed the glow and flickering of the lights were ‘the souls of the dead, who shrouded with these flames, were punished and purified’.³⁰⁴ Lavater, quoting Olaus Magnus, mentioned how people could mistake natural fires and phenomena in Iceland, a place associated with Purgatory, for ‘men burning like fier’.³⁰⁵

The place where they occurred was also suggestive of what they were. Occurring in graveyards, they were understood as the souls of the dead hovering over their graves. On the other hand, if they were seen along the banks of rivers and marshes, they hinted that a person had come to grief there and drowned. Of course, this then raised the question of the nature of their death and whether it was suicide or why their body had not been retrieved and

³⁰⁰ P. Barber, *Vampires, Burial and Death: Folklore and Reality* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 70.

³⁰¹ Nicolas Remy, *Demonolatry: An Account of the Historical Practice of Witchcraft (Dover Occult) With an Introduction and Notes by Montague Summers, Translated by E.A. Ashwin* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2008), 101.

³⁰² William Fulke, *A Goodly Gallerye with a most pleasaunt Prospect, into the Garden of naturall Contemplation, to behold the naturall Causes of all kynde of Meteors, as wel fyery and ayery, as watry and earthly, of whiche Sort be blasing Sterres, shooting Starres, Flames in the Ayre &c. Tho[n]der, Lightning, Earthquakes, &c. Rayne Dewe, Snowe, Cloudes, Springes &c. Stones, Metalles, Earthes &c. to the Glory of God, and the Profit of his Creaturs* (London, 1563), 12.

³⁰³ Valvasor, *Ehre*, 123; Le Loyer, *Treatise*, 78; Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 43-4.

³⁰⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 176-7. “etliche Leichtgläublige und einfältige Leutlein’...’ ‘die Seelen der Verstorbenen/ mit diesen Flammen umhüllt/ auch gestrafft/ und gereinigt würden’.

³⁰⁵ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 52.

honourably buried. It could also suggest that the person had been deliberately buried there, as an outcast from their own community.

Erasmus Francisci, a staunch Protestant writer, travelling late one night, saw a will-o'-the-wisp an hour before midnight, an event which frightened his servant:

My Thomas, who was a Catholic, believed it was a soul out of Purgatory or a denizen of Hell who could not rest, whose corpse was there, having perhaps been shot in a skirmish a number of years previously. Therefore, he spoke several short prayers for the dead.³⁰⁶

Here we can see how a confessional perspective interpreted an event in place. Thomas, the servant, understood these lights through a Catholic lens and then sought a reason for the event. The memory of an event was created, interpreting a place by telescoping wider historical memory onto a location by bestowing a natural phenomenon with a preternatural quality. A light burning by itself, outside the place where it should be and not behaving in a threatening or trickster-like manner, was most likely a soul undergoing punishment. In an age when Germany was scarred by the memory of the Thirty Years War, the likelihood that it was a soul killed suddenly in battle, most probably in its prime with its sins still unconfessed, was a good one. Interred outside consecrated ground, it yearned for honourable burial and prayers that would ease its current ordeal. Thomas offered such a prayer, both for the soul and as an apotropaic against any potential danger the spirit might present.

This slant associated with Catholicism, and likewise imputed by authors as the beliefs of much of the rural underclass, contrasted sharply with the orthodox Protestant interpretation. These lights were demonic trickery and temptation that would lead one into a spiritual and physical morass: both if one was particularly unfortunate.³⁰⁷ It is unclear the extent to which Protestant writers were playing on another potential interpretation for these lights, already current in late medieval and early modern Catholicism and folkloric belief and pushing that

³⁰⁶ Erasmus Francisci, *Der Wunder-reiche Uberzug unserer Nider-Welt/ Oder Erd-umgebende Lufft-Kreys/ Nach seinem natürlichen Wesen/ manchfaltigen Eigenschafften/ Nutzen/ und Würckungen/ natür- und unnatürlichen/ feuer- und wässerigen Erscheinungen/ ... erklärt : Nebst einer vorhergehenden Lustigen Spatzier- und Tisch-Unterredung/ [et]c. Und einem ... Anhange/ von dem Welt-Ort und Lauffe/ oder Stillstande der Lufft-umfangenen Erd-Kugel: ... / beschrieben/ durch Erasmum Francisci* (Nuremberg, 1680), 552. 'Mein Thomas, welcher Römischer Religion ist/ glaubte /es wäre eine Seele aus dem Fegefeuer/ oder wol gar eine Höllen=mässige/ die nicht ruhen könnte/ nachdem sie vielleicht in einem Scharmützel/ vor etlichen Jahren/ihren Leichnam allda/ vor einem kugel/ quittirt hätte (check with original here) deßwegen er auch etliche kurtze Gebetlein/ für die Abgestorbene sprach'.

³⁰⁷ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 172.

perspective at the expense of the Purgatorial paradigm or whether it was a blanket demonization of Catholic Purgatorial belief associated with this phenomenon. The Catholic lawyer Jean Bodin's (1530-1596) *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers*, first published in 1580, mentioned how 'St Anselm's Fire' would often mislead people near waterways and cause them to drown. There was no mention here in this instance of earthly Purgatories or the possibility that these were souls in torment.³⁰⁸ Similarly, Johann Jacob Bräuner, a Protestant, felt comfortable enough to quote a story from Liber Froidmont (1587-1653), the Catholic theologian and scientist from Liège, of how a relative was terrorised one night while crossing a field by three or four such lights which surrounded him, and which clearly were demonic in provenance.³⁰⁹

The deliberately misleading nature of *Irrlichter*, evinced not least in the very name they were given, was the paradigm within which they were now to be interpreted in Protestant belief. Travellers and those journeying by night in an unfamiliar countryside seem to have been most at risk of being waylaid or tricked by these lights. Johann Conrad Dannhauer (1603-1666), the south German Lutheran theologian, mentioned how foolish and stupid people would be afraid of seeing jack-o'-lanterns and will-o'-the wisps when they were travelling.³¹⁰ Francisci recorded a story of a man riding between Nuremberg and Nördling being tricked by the lights to cross at an extremely dangerous spot where the bridge had given out in the flood.³¹¹ Johann Jacob Bräuner also stated that they were field devils that would on occasion attack and kill men if an attempt was made to interact with them.³¹² At times, it was left to the discernment of the reader what these lights were. This probably mirrored the disorientation travellers confronted moving through unfamiliar landscapes, at night, unsure where they were, where they were going, and what they had just seen. It also potentially hints at more

³⁰⁸ Jean Bodin, *On the Demon-Mania of Witches: Translated by Randy A. Scott. Abridged with an Introduction by Jonathon L. Pearl: Notes by Randy A. Scott and Jonathon L. Pearl* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 1995), 167.

³⁰⁹ Bräuner, *Physicalisch- und Historisch-Erörterte Curiositaeten*, 213-4.

³¹⁰ Johann Conrad Dannhauer, *Catechismus Milch Oder Der Erklärung deß Christlichen Catechismi ... Theil / Zu Straßburg im Münster der Gemeine Gottes vorgetragen/ auff's new übersehen/ gebessert/ und auff begehren in Truck gegeben/ Durch Johann-Conrad Dannhawern/ der H. Schrifft Doctorem, bey der Universität Professorem und Predigern im Münster*, 11 vols (Strasbourg, 1653), IV, 418. 'Es gibt manchmal solch läppische und blöde Leute/ wann sie reisen/ fürchten sie sich für den Irrwischen'.

³¹¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 173-5.

³¹² Bräuner, *Physicalisch- und Historisch-Erörterte Curiositaeten*, 213.

folkloric tales, which defied definition and could not be easily sorted into the precise categories favoured by religious writers.

Where traditional Catholic and Protestant interpretations of these lights most closely intersected, was in the matter of those associated with treasure. Georg Friderich Retzel, an eighteenth-century writer on the occult, wrote how these lights 'usually indicate through their appearances, mostly in known places, buried treasure, riches and fortunes'.³¹³ There was a close connection between spirits and treasure in the earth, though the actual identity of these entities and whether they had been human once, was a matter of dispute. Many authorities, Catholic and Protestant, perceived them as part of Lucifer's fallen host that now dwelt under the earth. Many treasure-hunting techniques were dangerously akin to witchcraft, and the seeking of wealth in the ground, rather than true treasure in heaven, again suggested the demonic. Cases where the spirit spoke and claimed to be a soul offering a share of its hidden treasure so long as its conditions were met, demanded even greater caution. Such a transaction was clearly a pact. That it might demand Popish masses compounded the folly of those who succumbed to the temptation of earthly lucre.

One way to locate treasure was by supernatural night lights. These often indicated the presence of buried treasure and bore close parallels to the lights identified with souls which hovered over burial sites. Johannes Dillinger links these lights to medieval relic narratives and the incorporation of this trope within popular belief regarding hidden treasure.³¹⁴ This may be so but the folkloric belief in these lights as souls, already present in earlier Icelandic and Germanic tales and mentioned previously, could contradict this. One obvious question is whether treasure was buried alongside the corpse, or rather by locating the latter, one was in a better position to interact with the spirit by proximity to its mortal remains.

One should exert caution and avoid being swayed by the shrill sectarian polemic found in print. One should also be aware, as demonstrated here, of the existence of multiple

³¹³ Georg Friedrich Retzel, *Kurtzer Bericht Von den Unsichtbaren Wesen/ Und In dessen unermeßlichen Weite verhandelnen [!] Creaturen, guter und böser, auch syderischer, und elementarischer Geister/ Von derer letzteren Herkommen Wesen, und Würckung, Von Träumen und allerhand Phantasien, auch von Gespenstern, und Zauber-Krächften, und andern noch dazu gehörigen Sachen / Aus natürlicher Erkäntniß colligiret, und mit heiliger Schrift/ auch gesunden Vernunft-Schlüssen conciliiret, von D. Georg Friderich Retzeln.* (Blanckenberg, 1722), 342-3. 'durch ihre erscheinungen zu mehrmahlen in gewissen Orthen, vergrabene Schätze, Reichtum, und Glücke anzeigen'

³¹⁴ J. Dillinger, *Magical Treasure Hunting in Europe and North America: A History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 50.

interpretations for a phenomenon depending on the circumstances and context of each specific case. Elements of Catholic belief were clearly subsumed within a Protestant demonic paradigm. As with so much of the supernatural, tropes were interchangeable between entities. For hotter Protestants, this was a vindication of their satanic roots whereas, on the ground, at the local level, the circumstances of each case had to be understood within its proper context and place in the landscape.

A Tale of Two Cities

Isaiah predicted the destruction and desolation of Babylon. It is a key text in understanding early modern assumptions regarding spirits and place, particularly for Protestants. No longer would Babylon be the greatest city in the world or the city that oppressed the people of Israel. Instead, it would fall into ruin:

But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces.³¹⁵

Buildings impose order on nature. In the same vein, their ruin signified the return of chaos as the forces of nature moved in.³¹⁶ Ruins wrote morality into the landscape. They reminded people of the brevity of life and the ultimate emptiness of human ambition without God. They warned of His judgement and how He had and would again bring ruin upon the evildoer and those who abandoned Him. This desolation was the spoils of Satan's victory. Just as he taunted humanity by possessing the corpses of evildoers, in the same way, he taunted their memory by the overthrow of their dwelling places. Field devils and kobolds moved into the space vacated by the dead.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Isaiah 13. 21-22; Isaiah 34. 11-15.

³¹⁶ Y.F. Tuan, *Landscapes of Fear* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 6.

³¹⁷ Anon, *Der Vielförmige Hintzelmann oder Umbständliche und Merckwürdige Erzählung von einem Geist, so sich auf dem Hause Hudemühlen, und hernach zu Estrup im Lande Lüneburg unter Vielfältigen Gestalten ... sehen lassen / Aus bißhero noch niemahls gedruckten Nachrichten colligirt/ und ihrer Curiosität halber zum Druck befördert/ und mit unterschiedlichen Historien von Erscheinungen und Gespenstern vermehret/ und durch Kupffer vorgestellt* (Leipzig, 1704), 26-8; Abraham Saur, *Theatrum De Veneficis. || Das ist: || Von Teuffelsge || spenst, Zauberern vnd || Gifftbereitern/ Schwartzkünstlern/ Hex-|| en vnd Vnholden/ vieler fürnemmen Historien und Exempel/ be-|| wärten/ glaubwürdigen/ Alten vnd Newen Scribenten/ ... an Tag geben. || : Sampt etlicher hingerichten Zäuberischer Weiber gethaner Be-|| kanntnuß/ Examination, Prob/*

Georg Friderich Retzel recorded how all kinds of impure spirits would gather in the ruins of old, abandoned castles and buildings.³¹⁸ In studying ghost lore in the Hudson Valley in the twentieth century, Judith Richardson made an incisive comment on the double bind of ruins and hauntings. She observed that 'Not only does the decay of the house make it an apt scene for haunting after the fact, but the decay itself is explained by pre-existing haunting. Haunting serves as both consequence and cause'.³¹⁹ Here, the ruins themselves gain agency. It all fits with the orthodox Protestant interpretation of such places. It also raised the question why such places were haunted in the first place.

The Westphalian religious writer Johann von Münster (1560-1632) reminded his readers that their ultimate destination was 'not in the wastes, wilderness, mountains, valleys... and other frightening places but in the holy city of Jerusalem'.³²⁰ Place and salvation were intimately connected. Heaven and Hell were not merely states but also places. The course of human history was essentially a narrative of man's attempts to regain the place he had with God before expulsion from the Garden of Eden. The biblical journey towards the promised land and the building of a new Jerusalem were two recurrent soteriological motifs that were deeply impressed into the message of the Old and New Testaments and the Christian understanding of history. Much of Christian history was dominated by the motifs surrounding the cities of Jerusalem and Rome and journeys to and from them. The flow of history was measured by man's repeated attempts to build the city of God, only to fail each time by lapsing back into idolatry. The price they paid for this was destruction and exile. The victory of early Christianity appeared for long to have reversed these defeats. A new Rome was built on the ruins of the old, but it too, over time, fell victim to the ever-watchful Enemy that dwelled in its foundations. Over the long centuries, the Devil insinuated himself back into the city of God and perverted the faith from within.

Vrgicht vnd Straff/ ... jetzt auff's neuw/ | zusammen in ein Corpus bracht. | | Allen Vögten/ Schuldtheissen/ Amptleuthen ... dienstlich zu wissen/ ... / [compilirt ... durch M. A. S. F.] (Frankfurt am Main, 1586), 145.

³¹⁸ Retzel, *Kurtzer Bericht*, 381-2.

³¹⁹ Richardson, *Possessions*, 54.

³²⁰ Johann von Münster, *Ein Christlicher Vnderricht Von Gespensten/ Welche bey tag oder nacht den Menschen erscheinen: Zu ehren unnd freundlichem gefallen/ Etlichen fürnehmen unnd Gottfürchtigen Leuthen vorhin auff's Papier gebracht/ jetzt aber corrigirt und übersehen / Durch Johan von Münster zu Vortlage* (Hanau, 1601), 50. "nicht in den Einöden/ wildnissen/ Bergen/ Thalen/ alsten Gebewen/ unnd andern erschrecklichen ortern: sondern in der heyligen statt Jerusalem'.

The similarities between these spirits, especially those that purported to be saints, and early modern ghosts, only served to corroborate the Protestant narrative of Catholicism as a continuation of paganism. In the opinion of the virulently anti-Catholic polemicist Richard Bovet, there was no difference between the 'idolatries of the Roman Church with those of the Ancients', both being 'a Confederacy with Devils, and a practice necessarily promoting that detestable sin of witchcraft'.³²¹ For him, apparitions of ghosts, saints and pagan Greek and Roman spirits were all identical. They appeared in the same places and the puppet-master was the same. That monasteries and shrines were often built on sites where the old gods had been venerated, many in the wilds or at liminal topographical sites including caves, springs, rivers and mountains, only confirmed their original demonic instigation.³²² Bovet stated:

Ghosts, or spirits which require Temples, and worship, are no other than some of the Tainted, Expulsed Legions; and that the stranger Miracles performed by the Images or at the Shrines of these Deities, are the old delusions continued.³²³

Already, in much of Germany and England, where evangelical preaching was heard, rulers and people had abandoned the old faith and left its shrines and monasteries and monuments desolate. It was hoped that the Pope's Rome too would shortly face the same fate as the Rome of the Caesars and that of Babylon the Great. The memory of the idolatry that was practised within their walls would still pervade these ruins as Isaiah predicted. They, just as Babylon had been, would become 'a dwelling of the Devil' and their desolation a sign of God's judgement and the evil that persisted in their foundations.³²⁴ It was to be expected then that there would be more examples of hauntings in old castles, ruins and fallen monasteries than elsewhere.³²⁵ These apparitions were not souls, but the unclean spirits mentioned by Isaiah.

The idea that those who abandoned God became ghost-ridden was found in Isaiah 34 and from there could be read into Augustine's (354-430) tale of two cities. The judgement of God was visible in the ruins of Catholicism. The landscape of churches, monasteries, shrines and crosses which had been crucial to local economies of Purgatory were now overlaid with a

³²¹ Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 39.

³²² Christian, *Person*, 60-1.

³²³ Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 160.

³²⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 866. 'eine Behausung der Teufel / und Verhältniß aller unreinen Geister worden'.

³²⁵ Anon, *Vielförmige Hintzelmann*, 26. "viele Exempel wahrgenommen/ daß in alten Schlössern/ verfallenen Klöstern/ und lange bewohnten Häusern sich vielmahls des Satans Gauckelwerk und Possen Spiel durch Gespentsche Erscheinungen sehen lassen'.

demonic aspect. These were sites where spirits had been interacted with, where vows, compacts and sacrifices had been made to entities masquerading as the dead. They had served the same purpose as the pagan groves. They were places where evil spirits still lingered, on the liminalities of human existence in ruins, bordering the wild and sites between this world and the other. The Roman Church had become a desolation, both at the literal and metaphorical level.³²⁶

The Ruins of Popery

The haunted monastery was a trope long associated with the Gothic movement in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Novels like Horace Walpole's (1717-1797) *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), and Matthew Lewis' (1775-1818) *The Monk* (1796), among many others, constructed a vision of a haunted Europe of ghosts and Catholicism. Clearly, many of these attitudes linking aspects of the past, foreignness and Catholicism into the Gothic vision had their roots in the earlier invective of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, one where ghost-seeing, monks and papistry were closely intertwined. Johann Christoph Harenberg (1696-1774), a German evangelical historian most famous for his work on vampires, also wrote a pamphlet on a ghost that was seen in Braunschweig in the late 1740s. He noted how ghost stories were typically told 'about old monasteries, full of dark corners, where formerly so many works of darkness had been carried out'.³²⁷

Otto von Graben zum Stein, the Austrian renegade who entered the Prussian service of Friedrich Wilhelm I (1688-1740), was famous for his collection of ghost stories which painted a vision of a haunted Catholic Europe as well as many set in the Protestant cities of Dresden and Leipzig in the early to mid-eighteenth century. His own background as a former Servite monk undoubtedly contributed to his image as a collector of the cabinet of the weird, one that earned him varying degrees of respect, scepticism and contempt in his own lifetime. Many of his stories were based in places and regions familiar to him. These were the Tirol and

³²⁶ Dannhauer, *Catechismus*, IV, 410.

³²⁷ Johann Christoph Harenberg, *Wahrhafte Geschichte von Erscheinung eines Verstorbenen in Braunschweig: nebst denen von diesem Gespenste gesammelten Nachrichten / ans Licht gestellt von Adeisidaimone* (Braunschweig, 1749), 22. 'von altern Klöstern, die voll finstrier Winkel sind, und ehemals zu vielen Werken der Finsterniß gedient habn, ist man solche Erzählungen wohl gewohnt'.

Austria where he had been born and lived his early life, in Italy and Sicily where he had been a cleric, and in Bohemia and Protestant Saxony too. His tales focused on haunted castles, monasteries and churches, with spectral monks a dominant trope. He claimed since his arrival in Leipzig, he had heard so many tales about such monks.³²⁸ One example was a ghostly monk that would often be seen at the St Georg's orphanage in the city.³²⁹ He described spectral masses, processions of ghostly monks, lights and chanting at night not only in Leipzig but in Meissen, Halle and Habsburg Prague among others.³³⁰ He included tales of haunted monasteries in Prague, Austria, and Italy as well as stories about hidden treasure and death portents in German abbeys.³³¹ Others would tell of haunted churchyards and charnels in Bohemia.³³²

The monastery was a site both Catholicism and Protestantism understood as often haunted, but for very different reasons. The basis of many traditional Catholic ghost tropes was dominated by the subculture of the monastery. The theme of temptation was central to this. Ghosts of monks appeared to the living to confess their sins. They had failed to maintain the strict standards expected of them and faced punishment in the afterlife as a result. A typical example of this spirit trope was one among the many examples found in an aptly named 1674 Jesuit text, *Deß Fegfewrs A. B. C.*, or '*The ABC of Purgatory*'. It detailed a Sister Gertrude of the Cistercian order who had sinned in the choir of the church in life and thus was condemned in death to appear there, as that was where her Purgatory was.³³³ These stories not only affirmed Purgatory but also discipline within the monastic subculture. They reminded the wider reader and listener that although there were a few bad apples in the monastic barrel, these faced severe supernatural censure and that they were the exception rather than the rule. Ultimately, they functioned as just one of many means, to supernaturally vindicate monasticism as a lifestyle and institution in society. In addition, in lands formerly Catholic but now under Protestant control such as England, ghosts were prominent figures in sacrilege

³²⁸ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 83.

³²⁹ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 82-3.

³³⁰ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 13-15, 83-5, 129-30.

³³¹ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 90-1, 133-6, 190-5, 267-70.

³³² Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 161-3.

³³³ Anon, *Deß Fegfewrs A. B. C. 2. Seelen-Hülff/ 3. Seelen-Danck/ [et]c. / Mit lauter schönen/ und bewehrten Exempeln geziert. Durch einen Priester der Societet Jesu* (Munich, 1674). 'hab ich an disem Ort mein Fegfewr'; Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 53-4.

narratives where supernatural justice was dished out to those who had violated sacred sites.³³⁴

Protestants, on the other hand, could by citing ghost stories, construe monasteries as sites of sins and thus delegitimize the power they represented. Whereas in the Catholic tradition, ghosts appeared in their place of sin to confess transgression and suffer torment in either a double Purgatory or hell of place, Protestant divines could play on a range of motifs why evil spirits might be seen to walk more frequently in monasteries than other places. We have noted how the Devil appeared in the form and place of the sinner to celebrate his destruction. We have also noted the close relationship between ruins and spirits and the judgement of God apparent in the landscape itself. We have seen how writers like Richard Bovet stressed an intimate connection between paganism and Catholicism, both in content and the places where worship occurred.³³⁵ Monks, priests and friars had also long-standing associations with practising necromancy.³³⁶ Lavater stated how 'no kinde of men are more obnoxious to these kinde of things, than those whiche leade their life in monasteries and colleges'.³³⁷ Their involvement in the mass was cited as just one of many aspects of their magical dabbings.³³⁸ Monasteries and the churches associated with them were portrayed as sites of necromancy, false miracles and spurious relics. Monkcraft, as it was called, straddled both demonic witchcraft and cunning trickery, one facilitated more readily by the credulity and ignorance Catholicism had fostered.

Johannes Praetorius, in his exposition of the mountain spirit Rübezahl, attempted to examine the demonic façade of this spectre through the guise of the monk it appeared in. He noted the etymology of the word monk and its similarities to that of a horse with an uncloven hoof and the race of centaurs.³³⁹ He mentioned how some plants and even mermen would resemble monks and how once a woman had a baby that looked like one with his habit.³⁴⁰ Mention was also made of a monk who had intercourse with a cow which then gave birth to

³³⁴ Shell, *Oral Culture*, 30-2, 40-1; Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*, 204-7, 290-3.

³³⁵ Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 39, 160.

³³⁶ R. Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Canto, 2000), 151-176.

³³⁷ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 46.

³³⁸ David Derodon, *The Funeral of the Mass, or, The Mass Dead and Buried without Hope of Resurrection translated out of French*. (London, 1673), 72.

³³⁹ Praetorius, *Daemonologia*, 244-5.

³⁴⁰ Praetorius, *Daemonologia*, 247-8.

a monk.³⁴¹ He too noted that spirits often assumed the form of monks and that this was recorded by reliable authors such as the mineralogist and metallurgist, Georgius Agricola (1494-1555).³⁴² The monastery had been the home turf for this caste of magicians and conmen, a place where one still needed to be on guard against the evil spirits that might linger around the ruins. They were also sites of the dead and had been closely linked to the economy of Purgatory, one that monks had promoted with tales of supplicant ghosts, and one demonised in equal measure by Protestant stories of the Devil masquerading in the shapes of the deceased.

One tale that combined many of these themes was a story recorded by Praetorius, set in Leipzig. It involved a citizen of the city named Scheibe, who possessed a lodging on land formerly belonging to a Franciscan friary. While renovating his house, he found old knives behind a wall. A more gruesome discovery was unearthed in the cellar when many round pots filled with the bones of children were unearthed. From that time onwards, the inhabitants were incessantly plagued by a kobold or evil spirit.³⁴³ It persisted until the house was sold after several years and then dug up by treasure hunters. Praetorius lamented how common it was to hear such tales about the ill-treatment of children and their bones from so many monasteries and suggested that their remains had been peddled as relics by monks.³⁴⁴ It reaffirmed the idea of a cruel Catholicism, one that not only taught a cold creed when it came to the fate of unbaptised infants trapped in Limbo, far from their parents but also showed scant respect for their remains, presumably having exploited them for profit. Whether they were the bones of the baptised or unbaptised was unsaid. It also raised doubts regarding the power and efficacy of the Catholic Church in channelling the power, if any, of the saints through dubious relics.

Protestants could construe monasteries as sites of illicit sex, with ghosts intimately intertwined within this narrative. Lechery was a recurrent accusation levelled at monks. The state of celibacy was one of the defining characteristics between lay and religious in the medieval and early modern ages. It was also one that marked off Catholic clergy from

³⁴¹ Praetorius, *Daemonologia*, 249.

³⁴² Praetorius, *Daemonologia*, 248.

³⁴³ Johannes Praetorius, *Der Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf, Welcher in Hundert und achtzehn beschriebenen Abergläubischen Zetteln bestehet, womit die wahnwitzige Welt sich bereichern, und ihre Wolfart erkündigen oder* (Leipzig, 1669), 484-7.

³⁴⁴ Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 484, 486-7.

Protestant clergy. Sexual temptation had been a frequent test for the early monastic fathers who had wrestled with the Devil in the desert. Lavater noted how ‘many spirites haue appeared vnto certaine Hermites and Monkes in the shape of a woman, alluring and intising them to filthie lust’.³⁴⁵ Succumbing to that temptation, rather than resisting it, became more a dominant theme in the Protestant construction of the monk as the Other. Protestantism painted a picture of a Catholicism driven by lust-filled monks, one where the credulity and fear of women made them easy prey for a clerical caste, frightening them with visions and tales of spirits:

Now because Monks and priests liue idly, abounding in all wantonnesse, and yet are restrained from holy mariage, what maruell is it if at this time also they faine and counterfeite many visions, that they might therby easier enioy their loue.³⁴⁶

Richard Bovet recorded a house troubled with spirits in the West Country that had formerly been a nunnery. The original informant of the story related how during a night in 1667, while he rested in ‘a fine Wainscot Room, called my Ladies Chamber’, he was disturbed by the sight of ‘five Appearances of very fine and lovely Women...of excellent stature’ with fine dresses that ‘covered all but their faces, with thin, white Vails’. His companion, who was sharing the same bed, saw none of this but rather was terrorised by ‘a dreadful Monster, which assuming a shape betwixt that of a Lyon, and a Bear, attempted to come to the Beds Foot’. The next night, occupying the room by himself, he was troubled by ‘something walk about the Room, like a Woman with a Tabby Gown trailing’ which ‘made a mighty rushelling noise’.³⁴⁷ Bovet added further depth to the tale, mentioning how a footman of the lady whose house it was, took to bed one night with head pain. While he lay in bed, he saw the spectres of two beautiful young women approach him, strip him of his bedclothes and shirt and then proceed to rape him that he ‘concluded within himself he should die under their violences’.³⁴⁸ The emphasis on its former status as a convent was telling. The entity or entities were clearly demonic, able to shift shape and appear simultaneously in different forms to two separate people, at times as a bear, a traditional motif for the Devil, and other times as seductive succubi. This story

³⁴⁵ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 92.

³⁴⁶ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 46.

³⁴⁷ Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 202-6.

³⁴⁸ Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 222-5.

which appeared in Bovet's *Pandaemonium* corroborated the central theme of the work, namely his attempt to establish a link between paganism and Catholicism.

The link between monasteries, monks and ghosts was not merely confined to earlier times when the Pope's writ ran large but also as a construction of what the foreign Other was. We have already seen this with many of the tales of Graben zum Stein. In monasteries abroad, the same monks with the same old bag of tricks, that the ancestors of the good Protestant people of England and Germany had once sent packing, were still up to no good. They were still using ghosts to either scare women or to cover their own crimes of lechery. One tale of trickery, located in Arles in southern France, was of a monk who would bring a woman to the monastery of St Anthony, under the cover of a poltergeist 'to fright those who might see his Mistress'. The author claimed that so well-known was the story that '*S. Anthony's Ghost* is become a proverbial Expression, or softer Term for a *Whore*'.³⁴⁹ Antonio Gavin, a Spanish Protestant renegade, mentioned how a Calabrian abbot he knew was arrested by the Inquisition in Venice and spent a year in prison 'for Smiling at the Story a certain Monk told, about the Apparition of a Soul in Purgatory'.³⁵⁰ The same author recounted a similarly themed tale of two hermits trying to sell on stolen swaddling clothes at an inn. The woman they belonged to caught up with them and told how, 'whilst one of these Hermits was telling a Story, of an Apparition of the Souls in Purgatory, the other went forth into the Court, and took away her Childs Clouts, which she had hung up there to dry'.³⁵¹

Meanwhile, this Other was present in England too, clandestinely. Certain Papist households could be construed as especially prone to haunting. The presence within them of priests and Jesuits trained abroad was central to this. Jesuits were portrayed as masters in the art of exploiting spirits and hauntings, either staged or instigated by satanic means, to win converts. Women were their preferred quarry.³⁵² Secrecy and rumour encouraged wild speculation

³⁴⁹ Jean Dumont, Baron de Carlsroon, *A New Voyage to the Levant containing an Account of the most remarkable Curiosities in Germany, France, Italy, Malta, and Turkey: With historical Observations relating to the present and ancient State of those Countries / by the Sieur du Mont; Done into English, and adorn'd with Figures* (London, 1696), 95-9.

³⁵⁰ Antonio Gavin, *The Frauds of Romish Monks and Priests set forth in eight Letters / lately written by a Gentleman in his Journey into Italy, and publish'd for the Benefit of the Publick* (London, 1691), 71.

³⁵¹ Antonio Gavin, *Observations on a Journy to Naples wherein the Frauds of Romish Monks and Priests are farther discover'd / by the author of a late book entituled The frauds of Romish Monks and Priests* (London, 1691), 227.

³⁵² John Gee, *Nevv Shreds of the old Snare Containing the Apparitions of two new Female Ghosts. The Copies of diuers Letters of late Intercourse concerning Romish Affaires. Speciall Indulgences purchased at Rome, granted*

about what transpired there. In addition, priests would hide in their walls and even be buried within them, with their remains such as skulls, preserved as relics.³⁵³

Goods and appurtenances belonging to the Catholic Church were one common legendary source of treasure.³⁵⁴ Reformation polemic portrayed monks as both greedy and rich. Church goods were perhaps the most visible and closest form of treasure everyday people of most classes got close to. It was well understood that much of this treasure went missing during the Reformation, either into private hands or into the earth in the hope it would one day be recovered when the Catholic faith was restored. Some of this treasure was believed buried in the ruins of old monasteries. At the old Cistercian monastery in Sittichenbach near Mansfeld, at midnight, a ghost would be seen, and tumult heard in the former monastery as if the courtyard was full of riders, an indication the writer believed that treasure might have been hidden there.³⁵⁵ Other secreted wealth was scattered across the countryside in less obvious places, the locations of which a spirit might individually reveal to a person. One example of this was the story of the Gehofen ghost. From the 9 October 1683 to the Sunday after Easter 1684, Philippine Agnes von Eberstein was troubled by a spirit in the village of Gehofen in modern-day Thuringia. Appearing in the shape of a white-clad nun with a large red cross on its head, it claimed it was the ghost of Anna von Trebra who had buried treasure in the yard of her property during the Thirty Years War. She should unearth the treasure and divide it. Part of it consisting of old church goods should go to the Catholic Church, part should be given to the Eberstein family to erect a gravestone for her and decorate the local church and the remainder she could keep for herself.³⁵⁶ In October 1675 an apparition appeared to Maria Sabina and then other neighbours of an abbess of a former local convent in Glauchau in

to diuers English gentle-beleeuing Catholiques for their ready Money. A Catalogue of English Nunnes of the late Transportations within these two or three Yeares. By Iohn Gee, Master of Arts, late of Exon-Colledge in Oxford. (London, 1624), 1-25.

³⁵³ Shell, *Oral Culture*, 144-8; John Gerard, S.J., *The Autobiography of a Hunted Priest: Translated from the Latin by Philip Caraman, S.J.* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), 107.

³⁵⁴ Dillinger, *Magical Treasure*, 24-5, 116.

³⁵⁵ Johann Martin Schamel, *Historische Beschreibung Des alten Benedictiner-Klosters zu Oldisleben an der Unstrut : Worinnen von dessen Stiffterin, der Gräfin Adelheid ... gehandelt Und ... zugleich Nachricht von dem ehemaligen Cistercienser-Kloster Sittichenbach Wie auch dem Nonnen-Kloster Scheiplitz gegeben wird, Aus gehörigen Scribenten ... gezogen ; nebst beygefügtten Anmerkungen und Kupfern, Wie dieselben zur Fortsetzung der Thüringischen Kirchen- und Kloster-Antiquitäten abermahl ausgefertigt / Io. Martinvs Schamelivs* (Naumburg, 1730), 118-9.

³⁵⁶ Anon, *Das Gehofische Gespenst* (1684).

Saxony. It would appear at the end of her bed, crying, telling of a treasure she could obtain.³⁵⁷ Miriam Rieger has noted the same tendency in her study into Lutheran ghost belief in the heartland of the Reformation in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. She observed the close connection between the spirit, treasure and papism. Similar spectres were reported in 1699 in Purschitz, 1707 in Burkersdorf and in 1728 in Annaberg.³⁵⁸

In witchcraft narratives, the promises of the Devil were always empty, the wealth illusory and pathetic in its meanness. The same theme was working here. The goods these ghosts tempted the weak with were both illusory and deeply tainted. The old Church had practised idolatry little different from the pagan Greeks and Romans and its appurtenances were deeply contaminated by Popery. They were trinkets and baubles that had decorated the Beast and Whore of Babylon and were now proffered to the weakest links in society with the same temptation. Furthermore, certain church goods, notably reliquaries and chalices and patens so intimate to the process of transubstantiation, were items of immense spiritual power. Their proximity to the saints and the real presence of Christ in the Mass or, alternatively, their role as props in the Devil's playhouse, made them powerful fetishes. There were many tales of them shaking if their own sacred space was violated or proving unlucky to those who had stolen them.³⁵⁹ The agency that certain precious church goods, relics and the Host had in medieval tales was now portrayed by Protestant writers as inherently satanic. Having been consigned to the earth, spirits now wanted them to see the light of day again. The darkness below the surface of the earth was the underworld, a place of the dead whose master was Satan. Stanislaus Reinhard Acxtelmeier (b.1649) described how

the earth is Saturnine and dark, but Satan is the Prince of Darkness. What hides from the light and is given over to the dark, stands in the power of the Prince of Darkness as so much experience has shown that in the excavation of treasure there is no salvation. There is only terror and danger'.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁷ Ernst Eckhardt, *Chronik von Glauchau: Eine historische Beschreibung der Stadt, verbunden mit einem Jahrbuche über die wichtigsten Ereignisse und einer Geschichte des Hauses Schönburg* (Glauchau, 1882), 489-496.

³⁵⁸ Rieger, *Teufel*, 74.

³⁵⁹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 46-57.

³⁶⁰ Stanislaus Reinhard Acxtelmeier, *Misanthropus Audax. Das ist: Der alles anbellende Menschen-Hund: Wider die Fehler, Irrthumer, Mißbräuche, und abergläubische, Gottes-lästerliche, teuffelische Zauber-Wercke, und andere Laster ... / ... denen Irrgehenden zu Gemüth geleget, Und Im Reisen zusammen getragen Von Stanislaus Reinhard Acxtelmeier*. (Augsburg, 1710), 47. 'Die Erden Saturninisch und finster/ der Sathan aber ein Fürst der Finsternis ist. Was nun dem Licht entzogen/ und der Finsternis übergeben wird/ solches stehet in der Macht

For the learned Protestant reader of his time, fully versed in the Scripture, the demonic would have jumped out of the text in these accounts of ghosts enmeshed in Purgatorial and hidden treasure themes. It also embodied the anxiety that Papistry could one day reassert itself and return if vigilance was ever slackened.

Masses of the Dead

Masses of the dead and ghostly processions of monks were tropes frequently encountered in medieval ghost stories. They were an antique trope in Christianity, first mentioned in the correspondence between Evodius and Augustine. Evodius described how people would often hear prayer at night from churches or places where people lay buried and ghosts would be seen coming out of these buildings.³⁶¹ They combined later ideas of a Purgatory of place alongside that of a parallel society of the dead, located often in the very place their bones rested. Thietmar of Merseburg (975-1018), the historian and bishop, recorded the story of a mass of the dead in a church in Deventer in modern day Holland where a priest who repeatedly intruded on a service was killed by the spectral congregation.³⁶² In Walsleben, another priest encountered a spectral gathering at the door of his church early in the morning and was told by one of the congregation, whom he recognised as having recently deceased, that he himself would die soon afterwards.³⁶³ Thietmar also mentioned that ghostly lights and singing were witnessed in a church in Magdeburg.³⁶⁴ Other examples include Peter the Venerable (1092-1156) who recounted the tale of a ghostly gathering of dead monks in the chapter house at Charlieu in France.³⁶⁵ Another medieval tale related how a wicked knight, who intruded on a mass of the dead, was then followed from the churchyard and killed by two supernatural hounds.³⁶⁶

des/r Fürsten der Finsternis/ wie die vielfältige Erfahrung zeuget/ daß in Grabung der Schätzen kein Heil; sondern ins gemein grosser/n Schrecken und Gefährlichkeit'.

³⁶¹ Calmet, *Phantom World*, 147, 244; Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 18.

³⁶² Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 18.

³⁶³ Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 17.

³⁶⁴ Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 17.

³⁶⁵ Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 44-6.

³⁶⁶ Jean Bodin, *Anderer Theil Oder Anhang Johannis Bodini Dæmonomaniæ, Handelnd Von des leidigen Satans Macht und Gewalt über die Menschen/ so wohl durch ihm selbst/ als seine ihm ergebene Zauberer und Zauberinnen: Dargethan und erwiesen in vielen noch neulich geschehenen erschrecklichen Historien und warhafftigen Geschichten Besessener und vom Teuffel übel geplagter Leute* (Hamburg, 1698), 271.

Though an old trope, it was occasionally mentioned in Protestant early modern German sources, largely as a memory of the error and credulity of medieval Catholicism but also as an activity occurring more recently. I found no mention in sixteenth to eighteenth-century English texts of spirit masses occurring in England itself though admittedly it is possible that tales and belief existed at an oral level. The Husum pastor, Peter Goldschmidt (1662-1713), recorded tales of spirit masses in Rostock, Königsberg and Hamburg.³⁶⁷ The old woman who inadvertently stumbled into a spirit mass in Rostock was told by one of the congregation, whom she recognised as long dead, to leave immediately or risk harm.³⁶⁸ At the old Cistercian monastery in Sittichenbach near Mansfeld, spectres were seen and heard in the abbey. On a bright day, for an hour before noon, a procession of monks was observed to come out of the cellars with a crucifix at the front, and progress around the old Church before disappearing back in the same underground chamber from whence they had come.³⁶⁹ Graben zum Stein mentioned spirit masses as occurring in Halle and Meissen, while at Leipzig, between eleven and twelve at night, a ghostly bishop would emerge from the St Nicholas Church and praying, lights and singing would be heard from inside.³⁷⁰

There were multiple readings possible for these apparitions of monks in churches and adjoining graveyards. This can be demonstrated by examining one such procession of monks with lights and chanting which was witnessed in Sedlitz churchyard in Bohemia, on 20 August 1657 and again in 1663.³⁷¹ This occurred in an area which had been under Catholic control since the end of the Bohemian Revolt. Considering the desirability of Sedlitz as a place of interment, one is potentially dealing originally with a tale constructed around a medieval trope. For many Catholics, this would have reaffirmed the importance of the site as an interstice between the world of the living and the dead and helped consolidate local and

³⁶⁷ Peter Goldschmidt, *Höllischer Morpheus, welcher kund wird durch die geschehene Erscheinungen derer Gespenster und Polter-Geister, so bißhero zum Theil von keinen einzigen Scribenten angeführet und bemercket worden sind* (Hamburg, 1704), 358-9.

³⁶⁸ Goldschmidt, *Höllischer Morpheus*, 358.

³⁶⁹ Schamel, *Historische Beschreibung*, 118-9.

³⁷⁰ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 83-5, 13-15.

³⁷¹ Johann Hermann Dielhelm, *Denkwürdiger und nützlicher Antiquarius des Elb-Stroms Welcher die wichtigsten und angenehmsten geograph-histor- und politischen Merkwürdigkeiten, von dessen Ursprunge an, bis er sich in die Ost-See ergießt, darstellt : Anbey Eine genaue und ausführliche Erzählung von aller Städte, Schlösser, Festungen, Klöster, Flecken, Dörfer &c./c. ... ; Zum Nutzen der Reisenden und anderer Liebhaber seltener und sehenswürdiger Sachen ... nunmehr als ein Dritter Band des Rheinischen Antiquarii gesammelt, und nebst einem Anhang Von der Insel Heiligenland ; mit histor-geograph- und politischen Anmerkungen, ... / Von dem Nachforscher In Historischen Dingen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1741), 107.

wider Czech and German Catholic identities. It would have also confirmed Catholic thanatological thinking regarding Purgatorial reciprocities and the methods which helped a soul, a boon for the Cistercians who possessed the burial rights for the site. Such legends would certainly have served the Counter-Reformation cause of re-catholicisation and resacralising a German and Bohemian landscape ravaged by war, a form of 'spiritual medicine for heretical poison'.³⁷²

Meanwhile, for Protestants, this tale was much darker. Bohemia had been considered a bastion of anti-Catholicism with a pedigree that stretched back to Jan Hus (1369-1415). However, it languished once more under Rome, with the defeat of its nobilities at White Mountain (1620), the harsh terms of the Edict of Restitution (1629) and consolidation of Catholic power following the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). Stories of ghostly monks emerging from graveyard soil equated too closely with what Bohemia had suffered under a program of re-Catholicisation led by religious orders. Its fate could befall any other Protestant country, either by defeat in war or conversion of its rulers. For hotter Protestants, spectral monks, already hellish figures in themselves, arising from churchyards and places of death in the same manner as the apparition of Samuel needed no further explanation. For others, it was just another example of the superstitious monkish fables that characterised Catholicism which appealed to the fears of the gullible and ignorant. It was an attitude that became more pronounced into the eighteenth century, as educated Protestants relied less on the diabolical nature of Catholicism to define themselves against, emphasising instead that it was a religion which fostered intellectual darkness.

For Catholic and Protestant polemicists, monasteries and sites associated with the Old Church were places where spirits often appeared though for wildly different reasons. Alexandra Walsham noted how both Catholics and Protestants 'competed to control and shape the meaning of spaces in which they coexisted and intermingled promiscuously'.³⁷³ Ghost stories were one method of staking a claim to these sites and their associated memories. For clandestine Catholics, they affirmed the sanctity and legitimacy of the monastery and religious orders. They warned of the fate that awaited those who committed sacrilege at these sites. They also reminded the listener that despite state suppression in the past and

³⁷² Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*, 158.

³⁷³ Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*, 232, 151-2.

more contemporaneously, spirit monks still prayed and kept vigil for the hour when the one true Church would be reinstated. Like the sleeping emperor under the mountain, Catholicism too could awaken once again. For the hotter Protestant, on the other hand, they were a reminder of the dark times of Popery. They reminded audiences that though vanquished at home, the Bishop of Rome still ruled many lands and that their Reformation was not safe. The depressing lesson of biblical and Christian history was that the devil had always succeeded until now in creeping back in and subverting true religion. The old gods and demons could reassert themselves once more.

For the majority in between, it is harder to ascertain as their voice is less evident in the surviving record. In the case of England, both Alison Shell and Theo Brown have argued that ghost stories connected to former monasteries betrayed 'a perception of the ruins original inhabitants as wronged rather than evil' and an 'externalisation of a collective bad conscience about the Reformation'.³⁷⁴ The same ambivalence can be observed in two tales of ghostly monks recounted by Christian Lehmann. One dealt with the spectre of a monk at Grünhain that would appear on the site of the abbot's quarters of a ruined abbey and violently harass passers-by.³⁷⁵ The other occurred in a place of outstanding natural beauty, at a spring high up on the Fichtelberg. An old man, Abraham Munsch, reported seeing a monk sitting silently, reading an open book with a beautiful bird opposite him and the surroundings bathed in golden light.³⁷⁶ Despite his best efforts, he could never locate that same spring again. Both spirits embodied these ambivalent memories of Catholicism's contested past.

³⁷⁴ Shell, *Oral Culture*, 48; T. Brown, *The Fate of the Dead: A Study in Folk-Eschatology in the West Country after the Reformation* (Ipswich: Brewer, 1979), 41.

³⁷⁵ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 75.

³⁷⁶ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 250-1.

The Place of the Dead: The Haunted Churchyard

Churchyards and cemeteries have always evoked a sense of dread in humanity as the inevitable destination in the journey of life. They are places of ambivalence for the living. The corpses interred there embody both the love for the person, now gone, and a loathing for what he or she has now become under the soil. Just as people had their houses, so did the dead have their graves and tombs and just as the day was for the living, so, in much of the sources for the period, the night was for the dead and demonic. The picture painted of the churchyard in the works of Reginald Scot (1538-1599), Henry Bourne and Francis Grose depict a portrait of rustic graveyards which country yokels would fear to cross during the hours of darkness, a place from which the spirits of the dead would issue on their nocturnal wanderings.³⁷⁷ The eighteenth-century antiquarian Henry Bourne attributed this atmosphere of dread to

a Notion they have imbib'd, that in Church-Yards there is a frequent walking of the Spirits at the Dead-time of Night. Indeed, there is at that time something awful and horrible everywhere and it must be confess'd something more solemn in a church-yard, than in the generality of other places.³⁷⁸

Thomas Nashe (1567-1601), the Elizabethan pamphleteer, painted a vivid portrait of a staunchly Protestant interpretation why ghosts, namely the Devil in disguise, was 'more conversant and busy in churchyards and places where men are buried than in other places'. It was 'to make us believe that the bodies and souls of the departed rest entirely in his possession and the peculiar power of death is resigned to his disposition' as 'the bones of the dead the devil counts as his chief treasury, and therefore he is continually raking amongst them' in order to make people despair that 'after death their bones should take no rest'.³⁷⁹

This section will examine why the churchyard was understood as haunted throughout the period. It will look at how various ghostly tropes expressed anxieties about the fate and place of the dead in the burial ground, one that had relevance not only for the individual buried

³⁷⁷ Reginald Scot, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft by Reginald Scot: With an introduction by the Rev. Montague Summers* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1972), 86, 269; Grose, *Provincial Glossary*, 3; Bourne, *Antiquitates*, 59.

³⁷⁸ Bourne, *Antiquitates*, 60.

³⁷⁹ T. Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller and Other Works: Edited and with an Introduction by J.B. Steane* (London: Penguin, 1985), 211-12.

there but for the well-being of the wider community. It will look at tales of corpses and their spirits begging for burial, or demanding expulsion from the cemetery. It will examine revenants or the physical undead who came back to plague the living from their graves. It will also consider the place of the burial ground and the spectral and supernatural signs observed there as warnings for the future and vindication of the past. Many of these supernatural tropes were present in the medieval period and many continued into the Protestant era. This section will attempt to explain why certain ghosts proved so persistent and how they defined not only early modern identities but also conceptions of what identity in the past was.

The cemetery was a haunted place *par excellence*, a site that deserved to be haunted. The sense of liminality was reinforced by the likely presence of a church, a place where formal collective and private interaction between the human and spirit world took place. It was a site where one would presume the dead to be in peace, laid by the proper rites and in the proper place, a safe place for the decommissioning of their pollution. However, the belief that so many apparitions were seen in burial grounds exposed fault-lines and issues which sat uneasily with much of Protestant teaching for this period regarding ghosts and their identity. There was a perception that graveyards had always been considered haunted places, whether this was instigated by souls or devils, and that its roots lay in classical beliefs and superstitions.³⁸⁰

As mentioned earlier for Catholics, Purgatory was often seen as being endured both underground, and in this world too, at night-time, and at sites where the sinner had carried out their transgressions or where their body lay. The lure of the material world had proven too strong for a soul who had sought pleasure in the flesh, and thus remained bound to it and the place where it rested rather than aspire to the world of the spirit. Lights were often seen burning above graves, these *ignes fatui* believed to be the souls of the dead undergoing their torments, and this legend was most famously exploited in the tale attributed to Erasmus, of the priest placing candles on the backs of crabs to deceive the local yokels.³⁸¹ Johann Weikhard Freiherr von Valvasor (1641-1693), a natural historian from modern-day Slovenia, noted how a man, intent on building a shrine in a forest in Krain in Austria, played a similar

³⁸⁰ Bourne, *Antiquitates*, 60-64; Agrippa von Nettesheim, *Three Books*, 482-484.

³⁸¹ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 43-4.

trick on locals, hoping they would mistake the lights for souls.³⁸² It was also cited as a frequent trick boys and young men would play in churchyards.³⁸³ The graveyard was often seen as the location from which the dead would start their nightly rambling, and the one they would return to with the approach of day as famously described by Shakespeare:

For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast, And yonder shines
Aurora's harbinger; At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and
there, Troop home to churchyards: damned spirits all, That in
crossways and floods have burial, Already to their wormy beds are
gone.³⁸⁴

Loring M. Danforth, in a study of burial rituals in rural twentieth-century Greece, captured the importance of the grave as a monument of memory and an ongoing site of interaction between the living and the dead:

A person's grave serves to maintain the reality of his existence in tangible form, in the world of physical space, for those who want to engage in a social relationship with him. Not only is the grave a kind of house or home for the deceased, it is also a second house or second home for the bereaved woman, who spends so much time there visiting and caring for her dead relative. In addition, a grave is often personified. It comes to stand for the deceased himself.³⁸⁵

Though this model was observed for a culture, place and time distant from early modern England and Germany, potential parallels can be extracted from it. It was the place where the widow, heirs and wider community remembered the deceased, continued interaction with their memory and defined their current relations between the dead and the living. By tending the grave, one reminded a broader community that they were either a dutiful widow or heir of the deceased by the care they gave.

The care for the dead promoted by the Catholic Church was that of suffrages which would hasten the soul through Purgatory and into heaven. Masses, pilgrimages and vows were means to achieve this. However, the cheapest and easiest way of helping the dead was clearly praying for them. Much of this prayer would take place at the site where the body was interred, where the living were physically closest to the person they had loved in life. Prayer could be for the special, individual dead, or for the wider community of holy souls buried in

³⁸² Valvasor, *Ehre*, 123.

³⁸³ Le Loyer, *Treatise*, 78.

³⁸⁴ *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*, III. 2. 380-384.

³⁸⁵ L.M. Danforth, *The Death Rituals of Rural Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), 133.

the churchyard. Tales spoke of the dead arising from their graves, to protect those who had prayed for them from their enemies.³⁸⁶

It was this interaction with the dead which Protestant divines reacted violently against. The matter of indulgences had sparked the Reformation, but this quickly spiralled into an attack which questioned the existence of Purgatory, the nature of after-care for the dead and the whole notion of a reciprocity between the deceased and living. The form of pious interaction and memory encouraged at the graveyard by the Roman Church was blasphemy redolent of the paganism which had existed prior to Christ. At a time when the demonic pact was an integral component of witchcraft, any interaction with spirits based on reciprocity was tainted and highly dangerous. Indeed, the graveyard was often re-interpreted as a favourite haunt of the Devil, a place where one was dangerously exposed to the temptation to carry out idolatry in the mistaken belief that it would ease the souls of the dead on their journey through the otherworld or protect one from the supernatural dangers encountered there.

Central to this was a depiction of a cruel and deceitful Church, of monks exploiting grief and ignorance to get rich, by promoting a place of which there was no mention in the Bible. They played on grief. They played on ignorance. They played on women especially. They used fear and stories of ghosts to promote Purgatory in the very place of the dead. They used tales of spirits to affirm the necessity and desirability of interment in certain places over others and the power of the Church to mediate this access. Many of these ghosts were just tales that the ignorant might swallow. Others were fabricated and stage-managed by clerics well-versed in trickery. Certain apparitions, however, were of a more diabolical nature. Satan could masquerade in the form of a loved one as in the famous case of the spirit that 'came out of the ground' and appeared to a woman, Nicola Alberich, in the cemetery in Vervins in France, 'wrapped in a sheet', claiming to be her deceased grandfather who needed masses to be freed from Purgatory.³⁸⁷ There was another story involving a girl, a graveyard and the devil. Also set

³⁸⁶ Georg Pistorius, *Allgemeines Klaghauß Oder/ Catholische Leichpredigen Bey Begräbnussen der Kinder/ Jüngling/ Jungfrawen/ Ehe: Männeren/ Weiberen/ Kindtbetheren/ Wittiben/ Alten/ Obrigkeiten/ KriegsOfficieren/ Presthafften/ Armen/ Bawren/ Ehehalten/ Handels: und Handwercksleuthen/ Reisenden/ Fremdling/ Tagelöhnern/ Pfarrhern/ und Fürstl. Personen: Auch Vil andere Discurs von Andenck: Ankündigungen/ Gedächtnuß/ Vorbereitungen/ und Underschied guten und bösen Todts/ vom Fegfewr/ &c. welche bey allen LeichConducten, und sonst an Sonn: und Feyrtägen nutzlich zugebrauchen / Alles Auß Göttlicher Schrifft/ heiligen Vättern und Lehrern mit vilen Denckwürdigen Exempeln zur Lehr und Underweisung zusammen beschriben/ geprediget/ und in Truck verfertiget Durch Georgium Pistorium* (Dillingen, 1663), 277.

³⁸⁷ Bromhall, *History*, 53; Freud, *Gewissens=Fragen*, 68; Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 136-8.

in France but in Paris, it recounted how the Devil in the guise of 'a tall man of black colour', first approached an orphan girl grieving at the grave of her father Gervase. He told her that though 'thy Father and thy Mother are in a good Place', that still some masses and a pilgrimage to Compostela were needed. The spirit then tormented her over a period of time before finally leaving her.³⁸⁸

Peter Marshall, paraphrasing A.N. Galpern and Eamon Duffy, claimed that there was a good case to characterise late medieval Catholicism as 'a cult of the living in the service of the dead' whose definitive doctrine was that of Purgatory.³⁸⁹ What is clear is this was exactly the depiction of the Roman Church the Reformers promoted. Christ had stated that God was not the God of the dead but of the living.³⁹⁰ He had told the dead to bury themselves.³⁹¹ Not merely had their doctrine become infected with death, but even their very sites of worship. Graves, monuments to the dead, funerary altars and chapels dominated the interior space and architecture of many churches. Instead of places of joy, churches had become places of death.³⁹²

One element that contributed especial force to this was the veneration given by the Catholic Church to the saints at their tombs. Though they were in heaven, the saints retained a special link to their tombs and in legend would appear there on occasion.³⁹³ The presence of the saint's body sanctified the site and the power deriving from it could help those who solicited its aid. This could be in the service of the living who made petitions there or the dead buried within its bounds who fell under the saint's protection and could benefit from his proximity. The nearer the better. One was physically nearer to the remains of the saints which exuded

³⁸⁸ Bromhall, *History*, 53; Henning Grosse, *Magica, Dasz ist: Wunderbarliche Historien Von Gespensten vnd mancherley Erscheinungen der Geister, von zauberische Beschwerden, ... Item von Oraculis, Verkuendigungen vnd Weissagungen ... Aus bewerten vnd glaubwürdigen Historicis vnd andern Scribenten mit besonderm vleisz inn lateinischer Sprache zusammen getragen, Itzo aber ... in die deutsche Sprache ... gebracht* / Henning Grosse (Eisleben, 1600), 58-9.

³⁸⁹ Marshall, *Beliefs*, 7.

³⁹⁰ Matt 22. 32

³⁹¹ Matt 8. 22

³⁹² Martin Luther, *PASTORALE LVTHERI, Das ist: Nützlicher vnd nötiger Vnterricht/ von den fürnemsten stücken zum heiligen Ministerio gehörig/ Vnd richtige Antwort auff mancherley wichtige Fragen/ von schweren vnd gefährlichen Casibus/ so in demselbigen fürfallen mögen... Jetzt an vielen orten gemehret/ vnd mit nützlichen schönen Tractaten gebessert/ Durch M. Conradum Portam, Pfarherrn zu S. Peter vnd Paul in Eißleben. Sampt einem ordentlichen Register vnd newer Vorrede M. HIERONYMI MENCELII, der Graffs. Maßfelt Superintendenten* (1591), 355.

³⁹³ P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 3.

power.³⁹⁴ One was also nearer to the suppliants who visited the saints' tombs and thus more likely to be subject of their charitable prayers. Likewise, proximity to the altar and the site where mass was celebrated could only help the souls of the less sanctified on their way to heaven. The development of Purgatory as a third place for the soul and the economy of the sacred associated with it only reinforced such beliefs. The Church had mediated the manna of the saints at these sites and profited in power and money. Protestants rejected this and needed to delegitimise these beliefs. The spirits seen at them and the legends that grew up around their shrines were framed within a demonic paradigm of devils seducing the laity into idolatry rather than being the souls of the saints who were in God's presence alone. Even if they could, why would the souls of good men and women wander in places of corruption and pollution, in proximity to the flesh that had imprisoned them in life?

Another major reason for believing graveyards to be spirit-infested was that they were sites where witches interacted with the Devil. The sacrality of the burial ground and church was reversed at night in rituals which turned polarities upside down. Instead of interacting with God, one was in communion with the Devil. Instead of interacting appropriately with the deceased, their graves were being danced on or scavenged for ingredients for witchcraft. A particularly vivid church and graveyard sabbat supposedly occurred in North Berwick in the time of James VI. There was dancing, black candles, and the appearance of the Devil himself who mounted the pulpit of the church to address his flock. Graves were opened, and bones and body parts distributed to those present for malevolent purposes.³⁹⁵ There was also the opportunity for the lone necromancer, or one with a few confederates, to exploit the graveyard and presence of the recently dead to contact the spirit world. Classical witches and necromancers were understood to frequent graves precisely because the spirit of the deceased retained a proximity to its corpse and thus 'it was easy to take occasion to conjure up Ghosts'.³⁹⁶ Prominent examples of necromancy in early modern English sources include the rituals typical more of a grimoire and incorporated in chapter XV of later versions of Reginald Scot's original work. Here a soul was conjured at the gravesite to summon the spirit named Sibylla into a crystal which would then assist the magician 'come by treasures hidden

³⁹⁴ R. Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things?: Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 625.

³⁹⁵ Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World*, 16-17; Burton, *Kingdom*, 131-2.

³⁹⁶ Bekker, *World Bewitch'd*, 94-5.

in the earth' alongside other wishes and objectives.³⁹⁷ The same text mentioned the belief that the spirit of any man could be called up to one year after his death.³⁹⁸ This matched the popular notion that the soul either lingered close to the body or was present in this world for a certain amount of time after death. Aubrey mentioned how it was considered indecent for widows to remarry within the year 'because in that time the husbands body may be presumed to be rotten'.³⁹⁹ It corresponded to Jewish belief, often seen as close to Catholicism, that the dead remained close to their remains until a year after their death.⁴⁰⁰ The occultist Agrippa von Nettesheim warned however that graveyards may not necessarily be the most effective place to engage in necromancy, as the 'expiation and exorcisation of any place, and also the holy right of buriall being duely performed to the bodies, oftentimes prohibiteth the souls themselves to come up, and driveth them farther off the places of judgement'. He much preferred places 'where publike slaughters have lately been made, or where the carkasses of the slain, not as yet exiated, nor rightly buried, were some few yeers since put into the ground'.⁴⁰¹

This belief that the soul lingered close to the corpse, its former home, for some time after death was an ancient belief often attributed to Plato. Lavater described how

Plato doth thinke, that heroicall and excellent soules, as being of the pure sorte, do mount aloft: but that other baser and viler soules, that are defiled with the pleasures of the body, do wander belowe on the ground and the same he deemeth to be those spirites which are eftsones seen.⁴⁰²

Early Church thinkers had attempted to give a Christian veneer to this Platonic model. This was apparent in Origen (c.184-253) according to the Italian demonologist Guazzo, who recounted how a

wicked spirit, which is bound to the earth by horrid crimes so that it may not aspire to Heaven, goes wandering about the earth haunting

³⁹⁷ Scot, *Discoverie*, 232-5.

³⁹⁸ Scot, *Discoverie*, 80.

³⁹⁹ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 7.

⁴⁰⁰ Johann Friedrich Stockhausen, *Mira Praesagia Mortis Das ist: Wunderliche Todes-Vorboten: Welche Einigen Leuten durch übernatürliche oder doch oft entsetzliche Vor-Zeichen Ihren oder der Ihrigen Tod zuvor anzumelden pflegen / Aus heiliger Theologie und wahrer Philosophie betrachtet Von Joh. Friderich Stockhausen/ Prediger in Goßlar* (Frankfurt, 1694), 175-6.

⁴⁰¹ Agrippa von Nettesheim, *Three Books*, 489.

⁴⁰² Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 106; See also Bourne, *Antiquitates*, 61-2; Johann Michael Fleischer, *M. Johann Michael Fleischers zuverlässige Nachricht von einem Gespenste, welches sich 1749 zu Schwartzbach in der Pfarr-Wohnung, außer derselben, durch Werffen, Singen, Schlagen und Erscheinung geäußert hat* (Leipzig, 1750), 7.

graveyards; and in such places shadowy ghosts are most often seen dwelling upon this earth.⁴⁰³

The impression from the sources was that the spirits who would linger near their bodies after death were inclined towards evil.⁴⁰⁴ All of this was dismissed repeatedly by Protestant theologians as nonsense. The soul went either straight to God or to hell after death. It did not go to a third place, whether that might be Purgatory or the site where its earthly shell now lay buried. However, the very repetition one encounters in these denials does suggest that popular belief regarding such ideas proved remarkably obdurate throughout the period.

One reason for fearing the burial site was the widespread belief that the dead dwelt there and, depending on circumstance, were potentially conscious of the presence of the living. It was the place where the living and dead most closely interacted. A person was buried in the expectation that their body would rise again on the last day. Physically, they went in and physically they would come out again. The apparition of Samuel came up out of the earth.⁴⁰⁵ The Dutch theologian Balthasar Bekker (1634-1698) blamed 'Ignorance' for the belief 'that the Dead still live under the Earth'.⁴⁰⁶ Death was often understood as sleep.⁴⁰⁷ Already, in the fourth century, we have inscriptions on tombstones with the epitaphs 'requiescit in pace', 'recessit in pace', and 'dormit in pace'.⁴⁰⁸ It was an opinion Luther favoured and had backing in Luke 8. 52, John 11. 11 and Matthew 9. 24. Luther's Lenten Church postil of 1525 compared how

just as one who falls asleep and wakes up unexpectedly the next morning does not know what has happened, so we will suddenly rise up on the Last day without knowing what we were in death and have passed through death.⁴⁰⁹

The Frankfurt magistrate and pastor Bernhard Waldschmidt (1608-1665) claimed that 'our body will no longer be seen here but rest in the earth from all work, and sleep tight until the

⁴⁰³ Guazzo, *Compendium*, 59.

⁴⁰⁴ Retzel, *Kurtzer Bericht*, 333; Georg Wilhelm Wegner, *Georg Wilhelm Wegners Predigers zu Germendorf und Nassenheide Philosophische Abhandlung von Gespenstern Worinn zugleich eine kurtze Nachricht von dem Wustermarckischen Kobold gegeben wird* (Berlin, 1747), 44.

⁴⁰⁵ 1 Samuel 28. 11-15.

⁴⁰⁶ Bekker, *World*, 19.

⁴⁰⁷ Marshall, *Beliefs*, 221.

⁴⁰⁸ M. Dunn, *Belief and Religion in Barbarian Europe c. 350-700* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 137.

⁴⁰⁹ *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, 73 vols (Weimar: H. Böhlau Nachfolger, 1883-2009), 17, 2: 235.

joyful Day of Resurrection when it will come once more out of the grave'.⁴¹⁰ Henry Bourne, writing in the early eighteenth century, echoed this view when he described how 'When we leave the world, we lie down in our graves, and rest from our labours; sleep and darkness lay hold upon us, and there we shall abide to the last day'.⁴¹¹

The dead did not appreciate this sleep being disturbed or their space or remains being violated. Many tales, classical, medieval and more contemporary, littered the literature and legends for the period, telling of the fate of those who unwisely disturbed the dead. When Otto III (980-1002) had Charlemagne's (742-814) coffin opened to purloin jewellery buried within, the emperor's ghost appeared to threaten him on pain of death to pay more respect to his remains and grave goods.⁴¹² Lavater recounted a similar tale of a ghost appearing to a farmer in Campania who had accidentally unearthed his coffin, demanding that he be immediately reburied or his son would die.⁴¹³ In both cases, Otto and the farmer refused the spectres' threats and paid the ultimate price. In 1598, a manager at a monastery in Sedlitz in Bohemia who infringed on the cemetery bounds to plant more crops had his neck wrung by a spirit.⁴¹⁴ The antiquarian Jacob Daniel Ernst (1640-1707) related the tale of a skull near Laibach in the Austrian Krain, which rebuked a nobleman for mocking it and counselled that 'one should let the bones of the dead lie in peace and should neither be handled for wantonness or amusement'.⁴¹⁵ The Husum pastor Peter Goldschmidt, writing at the end of the seventeenth century in northern Germany, recalled the tale he had been told by Hinrich Claussen, a carpenter and one of his parishioners. As he was passing through the graveyard one evening, he stopped at the ossuary, picked up a skull and wondered aloud what the owner was doing and whether he or she was sleeping or not. Suddenly, he was assaulted by a rain of stones and bones and was driven, as if by an invisible crowd, from the churchyard,

⁴¹⁰ Waldschmidt, *Pythonissa Endorea*, 434. "Unser Leib aber werde sich nicht in seiner gestalt bald hier bald dorten/durfen sehen lassen/ sondern in der Erden ruhen von aller seinen Arbeit (Apoc. 14.v.13) vnd fast schlaffen biß an den frölichen jüngsten Tag/ alsdann aber auß dem Grab wider herfür kommen'.

⁴¹¹ Bourne, *Antiquitates*, 51.

⁴¹² Jacob Daniel Ernst, *Die Neu-auffgerichtete Schatz-Cammer, Vieler hundert anmuthiger und sonderbarer Erfindungen, Gedancken und Erzehlungen: Welche also eingerichtet, Daß die darinne in grosser Menge fürkommenden lieblichen Hostorien ... mit Fleisse angewendet werden / Außgefertiget Von M. Jacob Daniel Ersten* (Altenburg, 1696-1704), 1144-5.

⁴¹³ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 60-1.

⁴¹⁴ Dielhelm, *Denkwürdiger und nützlicher Antiquarius*, 108.

⁴¹⁵ Ernst, *Neu-auffgerichtete Schatz-Cammer*, 1142-1143. 'Man solte die Gebeine der Verstorbenen/ mit Ruhe liegen lassen/ und nicht Muthwillen noch Kurtzweil damit treiben'.

losing his hat in the process.⁴¹⁶ It was a story that bore a very close resemblance to a tale recorded by another antiquarian Johann Hermann Dielhelm (1702-1784), about a Jesuit called Rudolph Reichenberger who, entering Sedlitz ossuary in Bohemia on Easter Monday 1657, asked how many of the bones were of the damned. Unknown to him, they belonged to the saints and scarcely had he said these words when there arose a great tumult and the Jesuit barely escaped being stoned to death.⁴¹⁷

Clearly, we have a trope that existed in the Catholic medieval imagination and persisted into the early modern period amongst Protestants too. It emphasised the remains of the dead retaining some form of agency, even when reduced to bone. For Catholics, this would have acted as a reminder of the power of the saints alongside the need to respect the bones of lesser men and women. Protestants too would have been reminded to leave the dead in peace or expose themselves to unnecessary and unwanted supernatural assault, whatever the identity of the spirit behind it. Meanwhile, such stories with their mix of horror and the macabre were pleasing to tell as well as collect and could be additionally cited as either examples of superstition in the past or present, or as a form of proof in the world of spirits. The latter was certainly the case with tales of mockers receiving their supernatural comeuppance.

The purpose of the graveyard was to safely decommission the dead and manage the pollution from this process. The anthropologist Robert Hertz made two powerful observations from his fieldwork into mortuary culture in Borneo. The first was that objects needed to be destroyed in this world before they could pass over to the next and be reconstructed there. This applied to the corpse.⁴¹⁸ Maurice Bloch and Jonathon Parry applied this model to medieval Catholic beliefs, noting that ‘symbolically it is the corruption of the corpse which creates the purity of the soul’ and that as it is ‘the flesh which binds the soul to the profane world, putrescence thus becoming a necessary prelude to spiritual purification’.⁴¹⁹ Hertz also noted that the fate

⁴¹⁶ Goldschmidt, *Höllische Morpheus*, 201.

⁴¹⁷ Dielhelm, *Denkwürdiger und nützlicher Antiquarius*, 108-9. ‘da erhuben sich alle Gebeine mit einem grossen Getümmel/ und die Jesuite wurde von den Geistern aus dem beinhaus halb tot hinaus gesteiniget’.

⁴¹⁸ R. Hertz, *Death and the Right Hand*, trans. R. Needham and C. Needham (Aberdeen: Cohen & West, 1960), 46; P. Metcalf and R. Huntingdon (eds), *Celebrations of Death: The Anthropology of Mortuary Ritual* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 81.

⁴¹⁹ M. Bloch and J. Parry (eds), *Death and the Regeneration of Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 26.

of the body mirrored that of the soul.⁴²⁰ Until the flesh had dissolved to leave bare bone, a transformation which reflected the journey of the deceased's spirits to the ancestors, the dead remained unpredictable and dangerous, trapped in a liminal stage. Nancy Caciola, in her own research into medieval revenants, emphasised that a corpse that remained uncorrupted suggested it still hosted life.⁴²¹

Burial in a graveyard signified the acceptance of the deceased as a member of that community. In life, they abided by its standards and were thus accepted as its members. In death, though their personal salvation may be uncertain, they deserved the rights to a burial service which would not only ease their journey through the underworld but also assert their memory as full and respected members of the community and that the rights of their heirs should be protected. The physical world paralleled the spiritual world. Inclusion within the community graveyard permitted the pollution associated with the corpse to be safely decommissioned and for the deceased to negotiate the journey between this life and the next and in effect assume safe ancestor status. Nicola Whyte described 'the boundary of the Churchyard' as providing 'a clear symbolic and spatial separation of Christian and non-Christian death'.⁴²² Those within were candidates for salvation. Those outside, those who had been deliberately excluded from burial within, had committed sins so grave that precluded them from being granted any chance of salvation. Craig Koslofsky and David Warren Sabean have noted how in Germany the threat to deny honourable burial was a powerful weapon in the armoury of ministers, intent on disciplining the morality of their congregations.⁴²³

Burial was a sign of membership of a community. The refusal of a parish to bury a corpse in the graveyard indicated that the person was an outsider who was either a stranger or one who made themselves a stranger to the ethos of the community by their actions. Neither deserved to be a burden on the community's resources. Furthermore, they might risk pollution of the burial ground itself which for much of the time was the symbolic heart of the community. The diarist Samuel Pepys recalled being troubled by the sight of a corpse floating on the Thames for 'these four days and nobody takes him up to bury him, which is very

⁴²⁰ Metcalf and Huntingdon (eds), *Celebrations*, 34.

⁴²¹ Caciola, *Afterlives*, 105.

⁴²² Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape*, 155.

⁴²³ C. Koslofsky, *The Reformation of the Dead: Death and Ritual in Early Modern Germany, 1450-1700* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 103-4; Sabean, *Power*, 38-9, 52, 58-9.

barbarous'.⁴²⁴ We encounter a similar tale in a collection of stories attributed to the Jesuit Martin del Rio (1551-1608). A man coming to a wide and barren field saw the corpse of a farmer lying there, the sport for crows as nobody wanted to bury him, as he had lived a 'godless life' which even that day he had 'ended with a wicked death'.⁴²⁵ Johannes Praetorius recalled a story from the works of the philosopher Agathias (530-582). It related how a man encountered a corpse on the road and had it buried out of a feeling of mercy and duty. That night, a spectre appeared to him in a dream and told him to exhume him and leave his corpse as he had found it as 'the earth cannot bear such a one who committed fornication with his mother'.⁴²⁶

Formal burial and its attendant rites were a sign of respectability, declaring that death had been natural and that the dead deserved inclusion in the community graveyard. It would also potentially silence any serious suspicions concerning the morality or manner of death of the deceased. Suicide not merely damned the malefactor but also potentially damned the widow and heirs of the deceased to social death and poverty as the property was forfeit. This may explain the elaborate measures the widow of a Silesian shoemaker took to disguise his self-inflicted death and which in turn led to him returning as a revenant.⁴²⁷

One recurrent trope with ghosts was their wish to be honourably buried. This was especially true for murder victims whose remains had been secretly disposed of. Though unsaid in the sources, ghosts of murder victims not merely accused their killers, but in the manner of the spirit that appeared to Athenodorus, attempted to resolve the potential ambiguity surrounding their own deaths and thus ensure proper burials for themselves and a site for their memory.⁴²⁸ Sometimes, as in the tale recorded by the eighteenth-century writer Johann Christoph Sieckel, the bones of the dead would make their way home as in the case mentioned of a skull of a man murdered by his brother near Paatzdorf, near Meissen, that floated down the river Elbe to his home.⁴²⁹ Their exclusion from the graveyard was through

⁴²⁴ Samuel Pepys, *The Shorter Pepys: Selected and edited by Robert Latham* (London: Penguin, 1993), 188.

⁴²⁵ Del Río, *Denckwürdige Historien*, 8. 'gottloses leben...mit einem bösen Todt geendet hat'.

⁴²⁶ Praetorius, *Anthropodemvs*, 328. 'die Erde können einen solchen/ der mit seiner Mutter Unzucht getrieben nicht dulden; Calmet, *Phantom World*, 163; Bromhall, *History*, 9.

⁴²⁷ Burton, *Kingdom*, 34-5.

⁴²⁸ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 58-9.

⁴²⁹ Johann Christoph Sieckel, *Johann Christoph Sieckels Nachrichten von Polter-Geistern und gespenstischen Erscheinungen: so wohl, als merkwürdigen Ahndungen, und was davon zu halten, in LI. Erzehlungen: Drey Theile* (Quedlinburg, 1761), 46-8.

no fault of their own. They were not suicides or outcasts. Lying in unmarked graves, they were in the wrong place with doubt surrounding their fate, both mortal and immortal. By being transferred to the graveyard, they were put in the right place, one which signalled they were part of the Christian community, one deserving of salvation. This reaffirmed the power of the graveyard and those who administered access to it.

Sometimes in tales the body would never make it to the churchyard, confessing its sin on its deathbed, at its wake or during the funeral itself. Other times, the Devil himself would seize the corpse.⁴³⁰ The gravity of their sin had warranted punishment not only of their souls but of their bodies too. It also ensured that the churchyard would have the immediate source of potential pollution forcibly removed from it. Johann Beer, the Protestant émigré writer and composer who moved from his native Austria and died in the service of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, recounted a story he had heard in his old age in 1698. It concerned the corpse of the secretary to the Catholic ruler of the staunchly Protestant city of Heidelberg. Formerly an Evangelical minister, the man had converted to Catholicism to secure a better job in the administration. During his wake, the body exhibited horrible movements. Its eyes opened, its head turned, and its jaw started to chew. The shocked widow and circle around her, in a trope typical of these stories, wanted to keep this news secret but again, evidently failed to do so.⁴³¹ We will encounter in the next section corpses that chewed in their graves, bringing death to their loved ones and wider community. Another tale was one that occurred in 1664 in Merseburg in Saxony-Anhalt involving the body of a man raised a Catholic in the French-speaking part of Switzerland but who later became a Protestant. His burial was rushed as he was fat and it was summer. During the funeral sermon, sounds were heard from the coffin

⁴³⁰ Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 78-80; Hiob Fincel, *Wunderzeichen: Warhafftige beschreibung und gründlich verzeichnus schrecklicher Wunderzeichen und Geschichten, die von dem Jar an M. D. XVII. bis auff jtziges Jar M. D. LVI. geschehen und ergangen sind nach der Jarzal / Jobus Fincelius: Der ander Teil Wunderzeichen: Gründlich verzeichnus schrecklicher Wunderzeichen unnd Geschichten, so jinnerhalb viertzig Jahren sich begeben* (Leipzig, 1559); Johann Vulpium, *Magnificentia Parthenopolitana: Das ist Der Ur-alten Welt-berühmten Haupt- und Handel-Stadt Magdeburg Sonderbare Herrlichkeit: Nach ihrer Alten und jetzigen Beschaffenheit, Landes-Herren, Freyheiten und Gerechtigkeiten, alten und neuen Geschichten, Denckwürdigkeiten, Belager- und Eroberungen, insonderheit der An. 1631. den 10. May erfolgten jämmerlichen Zerstörung; aus vielen bewährten Historicis, Chronicken und gewissen Urkunden vorgestellt / Durch Johannem Vulpium, Sal. M. Not. P. Cæsar. Worzu kommen, Vota Devota Publica Magdeburgensia, Oder Beschreibung der am Crönungs-Tage Ih. Kön. Maj. Herrn Friderichs des Ersten, Königs in Preussen, Angestellten Ehren- und Freuden-Bezeugungen der Stadt Magdeburg. Nebst Heinrich Merckels, ... Warhafftem Berichte, von der An. 1550. und 51. ergangenen Magdeburgischen Belagerung* (Magdeburg, 1702), 300.

⁴³¹ Johann Beer, *Sein Leben, von ihm selbst erzählt: Herausgegeben von Adolf Schmiededecke mit einem Vorwort von Richard Alewyn* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), 112.

but when opened, no life was observed. The sexton claimed that for three nights afterwards that knocking could be heard from the grave.⁴³² The behaviour of his corpse raised questions concerning the sincerity of his conversion.

There were many legends regarding the expulsion of bodies from graveyards, either by their own volition or by another supernatural agency. Many of these stretched far back into the times of Popery and were associated in Protestant sources with the naivety and credulity that Gregory I had been instrumental in infecting Christianity with. The theme in many of these originally Catholic stories played on the Church's power to control access to the graveyard and thus proximity to the bodies of saints interred there. It reaffirmed the privilege of burial in the community cemetery. Noel Taillepied, claiming to cite St. Gregory, wrote 'that those who are lost are even more grievously tormented whilst their bodies lie in consecrated ground' and 'cites instances of unhappy souls who have appeared and wailing entreated that their carcasses shall be exhumed and cast in some spot far from the sanctuary'.⁴³³ There was the infamous case of Valentin, 'an indecent and frivolous man', who died in Genoa and was privileged with intramural Church burial, only to be dragged out of his grave, bound hand and foot, by two demons and found the next day outside the building.⁴³⁴ In Kent, there was the famous story mentioned in Lambard's history of the county, when a corpse that was washed up on the shores of Chatham parish was buried. The Lady of Chatham, who was the supernatural patron for the area, appeared to the parish clerk threatening to withdraw favour from town unless the corpse of that 'sinfull person, which so offended her eye with his gastly grinning' was removed. Exhumed, the corpse was cast back on the tide only to be pulled ashore and buried by the people of Gillingham. Shortly, afterwards, 'the Roode of Gillingham (say they) that a whyle before was busie in bestowing myracles, was now deprived of all that his former virtue: but also the very earth & place, wher this carckase was laide, did continually, for ever after, setle and sinke downward'.⁴³⁵

⁴³² Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 502-3.

⁴³³ Taillepied, *Treatise*, 77.

⁴³⁴ Georg Raw, *Abgefertigter Herold/ Auß der andern Welt: Von denen Im Fegfeur leydenden Seelen in diese Welt gesandt. Ihren elenden Zustand/ und dessen Ursachen außzurueffen. Item Etliche leichte Mittel/ ihnen zuhelffen/ anzuzeigen / Alles zu mercklichem Nutzen und Gewinn der Seelen-Helffern. Durch P. Georgium Raw, der Societet Jesu Priestern beschrieben* (Munich, 1673), 387-8 'ein unzuchtiger und leichtfertiger Mann'; Del Río, *Denckwürdige Historien*, 9-10; Bromhall, *History*, 36.

⁴³⁵ William Lambard, *A Perambulation of Kent conteining the Description, Hystorie, and Customes of that Shyre. Collected and written (for the most part) in the yeare. 1570. by William Lambard of Lincolnes Inne Gent. and nowe increased by the Addition of some Things which the Authour him selfe hath obserued since that time.*

The Orleans haunting of 1534 was a famous hoax perpetrated by Franciscan monks, intent on excluding a woman accused of Lutheran sympathies from burial in the church. The mayor's wife died and willed that she be buried in the Franciscans' church simply and with no pomp. It was a dangerous request as the friars evidently had hoped that more elaborate ceremonies would have brought in greater revenue for themselves and were incensed by the family donation of 'only sixe crownes, whereas they hoped for a farre greater pray'.⁴³⁶ Their greed spurred their revenge, so they manufactured a haunting, placing a novice in the roof of the church and having him behave in the manner expected of a ghost. They stage-managed the traditional interactive discourse with the hoax spirit so that it claimed to be the soul of the deceased woman who was now damned due to its Lutheran sympathies, apparent not least in the paucity of the funeral rites and that it should be dug up and expelled from the chapel. This demand and the refusal of this citizens to accede to it led to the bishop becoming involved who investigated the vaults in the roof and discovered the trickery, leading to action against those involved in the scam.⁴³⁷ It is interesting as it followed the model whereby the body or spirit of the damned made clear that it must be expelled from the burying ground. As a famous and frequently cited hoax in Protestant literature, this grave-centred 'ghost', contributed to the construction of a historical memory of a Catholicism dominated by monks, exploiting trickery and ignorance for their own gain in the place of the dead.

Another tale from seventeenth-century Germany is interesting to examine. On 10th April 1629, the apparition of an old grey man dressed in white, appeared to a David Frese and told him to listen to his message. Though one could read it as angelic, it just as easy to interpret it as a ghost, considering its function and concerns, and where it appeared. It warned Frese that the dead should be left in peace as they were 'crying about the bad treatment of their bodies' and that the church of St George where they lay should not be demolished. Furthermore, it appeared on a white stone (possibly the actual boundary stone itself) on the border heath

(London, 1576), 286-7; Mercurius Hibernicus, *A Pacquet of Popish Delusions, false Miracles, and lying Wonders together with many grand Divisions among Papists: Far exceeding both in quality and quantity those among Protestants: Notwithstanding their seeming Unity. Exposed to the Shame of Popery. Whereunto is added the Papists Dissentions from the Protestant: With (that, the enemy so much glorys-in, viz.) the Differences of the Protestants among themselves. And, a fearful Caution to apostatizing Protestants. By Mercurius Hibernicus* (London, 1681), 23-4.

⁴³⁶ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 37.

⁴³⁷ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 37-41.

between Lübeck and Sachsen-Lauenberg.⁴³⁸ It also called for repentance and entrusted Frese with the mission to convey its message to the authorities. The response of the Lübeck clergy who suggested that it could be a demon or papist fraud also corroborates a view of this apparition as a potential ghost.⁴³⁹

Revenants and Shroudeaters

Revenants were the reanimated corpses of the dead. Just as Satan could possess the living, so too could he possess the dead, the body being an empty garment from which the soul had already fled.⁴⁴⁰ The demonologist Nicolas Remy described them in these terms:

For since they are foul and unclean spirits, it should not be surprising that as a pig returns to its wallowing place, they should find their favourite habitation and lodging in stinking corpses. And therefore, it is that ghosts, that is demons, are chiefly to be met with in Churchyards and in places of punishment and execution for criminals.⁴⁴¹

In learned demonology, the reanimated corpse was an important figure in the interaction between the witch and the devil and in necromantic rituals.⁴⁴² However, in this section we are more focused on the behaviour of revenants based in the grave, whose malignancy radiated outwards, bringing death to the living. Some could rise from their tombs to assault and kill. Others would slay their young in their sleep. Many others would work more insidiously, chewing their shrouds in the soil, causing the demise of those closest to them in life. Themes of pollution and contagion were central to their understanding. Most were either signs or causes of impending plague.

The violent physical revenant, or *draugr* as it was known in Scandinavia, was central to Germanic and northern European conceptions of the restless dead.⁴⁴³ It had pre-Christian

⁴³⁸ J. Beyer, 'A Lübeck Prophet in Local and Lutheran Context', in Scribner and Johnson (eds), *Popular Religion*, 166-7, 172.

⁴³⁹ Beyer, 'Lübeck Prophet', 171-2.

⁴⁴⁰ N. Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants and Ritual in Medieval Culture', *Past & Present*, 152 (1996), 12.

⁴⁴¹ Remy, *Demonolatry*, 88.

⁴⁴² Boguet, *Examen*, 21, 33; Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 836-7; Hermann Witekind, *Christelich Bedencken unnd Erinnerungen von Zauberey: Woher/ was/ und wie vielfältig sie sey ... / Diesen zeiten ... zu mehrerem Bericht an Tag gegeben/ durch A. L. V. S.* (Basel, 1627), 149.

⁴⁴³ Caciola, *Afterlives*, 110; Lecouteux, *Encyclopedia*, 69-70.

roots and was found from Iceland, down through England and Denmark and across modern Germany, Poland and the Baltic. Slavic cultures too had a strong tradition of physical revenants, one that Orthodox Christianity catered to and influenced, with its emphasis on the binary of flesh and bone and necessity of the destruction of the former to pass over to the afterlife.⁴⁴⁴ It was this model of the undead that confronted those intent on Christianising northern and eastern Europe and persisted in many places right through the early modern period, though now with a Christian veneer, whether that be Protestant, Catholic or Orthodox. The revenant worked as binary opposite of the medieval saint in the cemetery. Whereas saints acted as patrons for the wider community and brought benefit to those buried nearby, the revenant polluted the sacred space of the cemetery, necessary for the safe decommissioning of the dead, and brought death instead. The pollution of the grave spilt outwards, infecting the living.

From my own research into revenants in Protestant communities, I have encountered little evidence to show that this trope was construed within the same vehemently anti-Catholic confessionalising polemic as the Purgatorial spectre was. There were indeed condemnations of the belief as a by-product of ignorance, one more suited to the time of one's grandparents than today. The writer on spirits Johann von Münster dismissed tales of grave dwelling revenants as 'a fat lie as would have been believed and accepted by our ancestors', a sentiment matched by the historian Johann Christian Schöttgen (1687-1751), who accounted such stories as 'the type of superstition one would have heard his grandmother tell'. Interestingly, the former's work was first published in 1591 while Schöttgen's was in 1717.⁴⁴⁵ Furthermore, the corpses of those whose Protestantism had been a façade or those suspected of apostasy to Catholicism could exhibit awful signs, but this should be understood as one sin among many others that anathematised one in life and death. Rather it seems that Protestant and Catholic theologians shared the same concepts of demonic corpse possession and that their flocks shared equally in the fear of such creatures. In addition, both Catholic

⁴⁴⁴ Danforth, *Death Rituals*, 48-9.

⁴⁴⁵ Johann von Münster, *Ein Christlicher Unterricht Von Den Gespensten, Welche Bey Tag Oder Nacht Den Menschen Erscheinen* / Johann Von Münster (Bremen, 1591), 19. 'diese plumpe Lügen ist/ von den Voreltern dermassen geglaubet und angenommen worden'; Christian Schöttgen, *Historie Der Chur-Sächsischen Stiffts-Stadt Wurtzen: Aus gehörigen Documenten und glaubwürdigen Nachrichten zusammen getragen* / von Christian Schöttgen, Rectore der Schulen zu Franckfurt an der Oder (Leipzig, 1717), 662. 'dergleichen Aberglauben/ die man von seiner Grosse Mutter hat erzehlen gehöret'.

and Protestant learned elites faced the same problem of attempting to curb popular remedies for these monsters, namely the stake, pyre and river while convincing the populace of the efficacy of a Christian substitute.

Claims have been made that belief in the walking dead had disappeared in England by the Reformation.⁴⁴⁶ This is in stark contrast to the rich mine of stories one finds for the medieval period in England, most notably the fourteenth-century tales set around Byland Abbey in Yorkshire and those recorded by the canon William of Newburgh (c.1136-1198). Scandinavian influence has been detected in both groups.⁴⁴⁷ William of Newburgh noted how tales of revenants were common in England, an observation backed up by the famous historian William of Malmesbury (c.1095-1143), who scorned a belief 'virtually innate in the English nation' concerning 'rubbish about wandering corpses'.⁴⁴⁸ Both Owen Davies and Jacqueline Simpson suggested that the Catholic Purgatorial ghost model most probably hegemonized the space and anxieties such revenants traditionally occupied and as a result, they disappeared from the later medieval English record.⁴⁴⁹

There are vague hints that belief in revenants did continue in early modern England. The staking of suicides persisted in law until 1823, a tactic employed in the past and on the continent more recently, to destroy the undead.⁴⁵⁰ However, though these rites of desecration remained throughout the early modern period, Jacqueline Simpson recorded no documented cases of corpses being exhumed to check for signs of unlife.⁴⁵¹ One must also remember that the meaning of ritual can change while preserving its outward features. Owen Davies, as mentioned earlier, argued staking as pinning the soul to a location in English ghostlore rather than destroying the vessel which it inhabited.⁴⁵² The only reference I encountered in the record dealing with a corpse being dug up to examine it in England itself was one in a ballad called *The Suffolk Miracle* in which a dead horseman carried his love forty miles one night.⁴⁵³ Here the conventions of the revenant lover in balladry overrode tropes of

⁴⁴⁶ Davies, *Haunted*, 72.

⁴⁴⁷ Joyes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 134, 166.

⁴⁴⁸ Caciola, 'Wraiths', 20-1; Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 61-2.

⁴⁴⁹ Davies, *Haunted*, 103-4; J. Simpson, 'Repentant Soul or Walking Corpse? Debatable Apparitions in Medieval England', *Folklore*, 114:3 (2003), 394.

⁴⁵⁰ Davies, *Haunted*, 52.

⁴⁵¹ Simpson, 'Repentant Soul', 394.

⁴⁵² Davies, *Haunted*, 52.

⁴⁵³ Anon, *The Suffolk Miracle. Or A Relation of a young Man who a Month after his Death appeared to his Sweetheart and carryed her behind him forty Miles in two hours Time, and was never seen after but in the*

the violent dead. There was also the tale of Isabel Herriot, set in Ormiston near Edinburgh in the winter of 1680-1, who was seen walking from the chapel one night in the shroud in which she had been buried.⁴⁵⁴ Though her 'stunkard ill nature bred suspicion' and she harassed the minister, there was no mention of having her exhumed.⁴⁵⁵ In Robert Burton's account of the haunting, he questioned whether it was 'her real Body acted by the Devil', or more likely, according to him, 'Satan taking upon him her shape and Form, and imitating her to the Life'.⁴⁵⁶ There was another tale, set again in Scotland, of a John Ritchy who was disturbed, while in the company of a new lover, by the sight of his recently dead wife, in 'her burying cloths looking toward them in at the window'.⁴⁵⁷ There was one story from the English record, set in 1659, of the corpse of a seaman of the ship, Dunbar, dead five days and buried onshore, who then appeared to demand that he be buried further inland. The corpse stood 'upright in his grave for five days' at noontide (an hour associated with evil spirits) and cried 'with a most shrill voice' that he would 'disturb and molest all shipping that should come up that Road'.⁴⁵⁸ However, it did not leave its grave to harass the living, though the threat was implicit. It was also reburied before this could happen.

Though violence was a feature of the revenant trope, other supernatural creatures, whether ghost or spirit, were capable of it too. The ghost of James Haddock that Francis Taverner encountered on the outskirts of Belfast in 1662, threatened to 'tear him in pieces if he did not do' what the spirit had originally bidden him.⁴⁵⁹ The physicality of the entity was a key component of the revenant, but Protestant ghost theory essentially allowed this with the Devil's mastery of the deception of the senses. Nor was any mention made by John Aubrey,

Grave. To the Tune of, My bleeding Heart, &c., (London, 1678-81). It also bore parallels to the classical tale, much recycled in early modern song and text, of Philinnion and Machates, with the emphasis on the keepsake exchanged between the living and the dead lovers but found in the grave of the latter

⁴⁵⁴ Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World*, 95-6.

⁴⁵⁵ Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World*, 95-101; Burton, *Kingdom*, 80-83.

⁴⁵⁶ Burton, *Kingdom*, 83.

⁴⁵⁷ Burton, *Kingdom*, 24.

⁴⁵⁸ Anon, *The VVonder of VVonders, or, a true Relation of a late strange and miraculous Accident that happened to one that dyed in the Ship called, the Dunbar, who after he had been buried one Shore above five daies, rise again, and standing upright in his Grave, called to the Fleet with a shrill Voice at Noon-day, telling them the Events that should happen to all those Ships that went towards the Sound. With the several Speeches made by him, to the wonderful Astonishment and Admiration of divers of the Fleet, who were both Hearers and Eye-witnesses, and will justifie the Truth of this great Miracle. With a great and strange Apparition of two Armies that appeared in the north of England on Thursday last, with the exact Manner of their engaging one another at Noon-day with the thundring Noise both of great and small Shot* (London, 1659), 2-3.

⁴⁵⁹ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 383.

the collector of tales potentially closest to the English folkloric tradition, nor any either by the historian Henry Bourne in his *Antiquitates Vulgares* (1725), another work that tried to record popular beliefs and customs. Daniel Defoe, the journalist and novelist writing in the early eighteenth century under the pseudonym of Andrew Moreton, described how ‘the apparitions of Body, moving, appearing, walking, or whatever we may call it, without Soul or Spirit, is what was never heard of, and scarce ever suggested’.⁴⁶⁰ In lieu of a hidden oral tradition that print failed to record, it is probably best to accept that the physical revenant was not a part of the contemporary mainstream English popular culture. There was an awareness that it existed abroad as Robert Burton and others related tales of Silesian, Bohemian and Moravian revenants. However, as Jacqueline Simpson pointed out, the exhumation of corpses and their destruction was the defining feature of the revenant, one that was missing in early modern England.⁴⁶¹

This raises the question why a similar process did not occur in Germany where revenant belief persisted among Protestants and Catholics into the eighteenth century. Admittedly, much of eastern Germany was Christianised later than England. However, the idea that the Purgatorial spectre addressed concerns raised by revenants, leading to the demise of this trope in England, is not wholly convincing. Both England and Germany shared the same Purgatorial model of the ghost as Catholic countries so one must ask why this would be more spectacularly successful in one country rather than another. In addition, one could pose the question whether the Purgatorial model of the ghost effectively addressed the anxieties raised by a certain type of undead. Physical revenants were evil. There was no purpose in any interaction with them beyond the fire and water. There was no soul to save.

It was one that arguably the Catholic Church did contain in England but failed to do so in Germany. William of Newburgh in the twelfth century recorded the tale of a revenant terrorising Buckinghamshire, one that the bishop of Lincoln (successfully) laid by placing a letter of absolution in its grave rather than the ‘usual remedy’ of cremation which the local community wanted.⁴⁶² Luther in the sixteenth century railed against the rites of desecration,

⁴⁶⁰ Moreton, *Secrets*, 50.

⁴⁶¹ Simpson, ‘Repentant Soul’, 394.

⁴⁶² Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 136.

recommending prayer and repentance instead.⁴⁶³ The long-standing failure of the church authorities in Germany to convince the laity of the efficacy of its tactics and power in dealing with this one particular type of supernatural creature points to the strength of a belief which encapsulated so many anxieties about pollution, contagion and death.

Furthermore, when England and most of Germany became Protestant, both shared the same learned demonological view that a corpse could be possessed by the Devil, a central feature of the understanding of the physical interaction involved between the witch and its master. However, there does appear to be a difference in behavioural tropes between such corpses, often reanimated from those hanging on the gallows, to those revenants which emerged from their tombs.

One could argue that Slavic influence was critical to revenant belief in Germany and further afield, occurring along interstices across the continent where German and Slav cultures intermingled. The most famous of all vampire scares, which made this phenomenon a talking point throughout Europe, occurred in Serbia in the 1720s and 1730s with the cases of Arnold Paole (1726, 1731) and Peter Plogojovitz (1725) in Slav Orthodox territories, previously under Turkish rule but now facing incorporation into the Catholic Austrian state following the treaties of Karlowitz (1699) and Passarowitz (1718).⁴⁶⁴ Likewise, the most famous sixteenth and seventeenth-century revenant tales shared in English and German print were those set in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, areas where both German and Slav cultures interacted. Clearly, stories from the faultline where both cultures met were critical at times in publicising the more spectacular and lurid cases of revenancy. However, this should not conceal the extent to which ideas of revenancy existed in Germany itself throughout the period.

There was a long-standing indigenous Germanic tradition of revenants, exemplified by the *draugr* in northern European countries, up until the medieval period. The most prominent early modern German trope of revenant was the *Nachzehrer*, an undead corpse that fed off the living.⁴⁶⁵ It was a topic Martin Luther himself addressed in the sixteenth century.⁴⁶⁶ It was one that Michael Ranft (1700-1774), the Lutheran pastor and undead expert, would again

⁴⁶³ Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Tischreden*, 6 vols (Weimar: H. Böhlau Nachfolger, 1912-1921), 6: 214.

⁴⁶⁴ Barber, *Vampires*, 6-9, 15-20.

⁴⁶⁵ Lecouteux, *Encyclopedia*, 200.

⁴⁶⁶ Luther, *Tischreden*, 6: 214.

investigate in the early eighteenth century in his 1728 work dealing with the mastication of the dead in their graves.⁴⁶⁷ Germany had its own rich tradition of corpses that made chewing sounds in their graves and ate their shrouds. There was also the Six-Weeker (*Sechswöchernin*) trope of the unchurched mother, who dying during or soon after birth, would return and kill her own child. None of these tropes were recorded as occurring in early modern England. All suggested vibrant regional folklores and tropes with older pagan roots which persisted as they remained relevant as methods and means of defining and negotiating anxieties concerning morality, space, pollution and death.

One of the earliest recorded accounts of a *Nachzehrer* was found in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1487), concerning 'a town once was almost rendered destitute by the death of its citizens'. It told of 'a rumour that a certain buried woman was gradually eating the shroud in which she had been buried, and that the plague could not cease until she had eaten the whole shroud'.⁴⁶⁸ The key feature of this supernatural trope, as we shall see, was that the corpse would eat its own shroud in the grave, and as it consumed it, so all those who knew or loved it in life would perish too. This would be accompanied by the sounds of chewing and smacking from the grave which provided the popular name for this phenomenon called the *Schmätzende Todt*. Prominent incidents involving shroud eating and *schmätzen* were recorded in Freiburg in 1552, in Silesia in 1553, in Sangerhausen in 1565 and in Merseburg in 1583.⁴⁶⁹ In the same years, Erasmus Francisci claimed that it occurred throughout Saxony.⁴⁷⁰ These mirrored earlier cases recorded in Bohemia at Cadan in 1357 and Levin in 1345.⁴⁷¹ Johann Christoph Harenberg, the evangelical theologian and historian writing in the 1730s, recounted how a few years before in his hometown of Alfeld, the sound of 'Schmackens und Saugens' was heard from a grave but as no plague followed, the body was not dug up and

⁴⁶⁷ Michael Ranft, *De masticatione mortuorum in tumulis, (Oder von dem Kauen und Schmatzen der Todten in Gräbern) liber singularis: exhibens duas exercitationes, quarum prior historico-critica posterior philosophica est. Martini*, (Leipzig 1728).

⁴⁶⁸ Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, *The Malleus Maleficarum of Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger: Translated with an introduction bibliography & notes by the Reverend Montague Summers* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1971), 78.

⁴⁶⁹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 260; Martin Behm, *Die drey grossen Landtplagen/ Krieg/ Tewrung/ Pestilentz/ welche jetzundt vor der Welt Ende/ in vollem schwang gehen: Den frommen Kindern Gottes ... In XXIII. Predigten erkleret / Durch Martinum Bohemum Laubanensem, Predigern daselbst* (Wittenberg, 1601), 141-3.

⁴⁷⁰ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 260.

⁴⁷¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 256-8.

staked as it would have been in the past.⁴⁷² The biblical scholar Christian Schöttgen recorded how rumours of the chewing dead came to the attention of the minister in 1595 in his hometown of Wurzen in Saxony.⁴⁷³

This preternatural phenomenon was intimately linked to plague and ideas of contagion. Christian Schöttgen noted how 'It is not unusual in time of plague (that the gravedigger professes that he has heard this or that corpse masticate in the grave...and say, it means that the dead will fetch still more of his friends'.⁴⁷⁴ Women were especially prey to this condition during the plague. The Lutheran hymn-writer Martin Behm (1557-1622) described how the corpses of certain women would make sounds 'like a pig eating', which signalled that her family would die soon afterwards, a view echoed by Francisci.⁴⁷⁵ This idea linking the corpse chewing to contagion and death was central to the trope.⁴⁷⁶ In the case of a woman, the traditional nurturer and provider of food, the revenant provided a powerful binary opposite. Instead of enabling life, the revenant curtailed it. Instead of feeding others, it fed off them and brought a cycle of death to those closest to it.

Mary Douglas defined pollution as 'matter out of place', a binary of order and disorder. She noted how the causes of disease and disaster were sought in breaches of morality and how the 'whole universe' was 'harnessed to men's attempts to force one another into good citizenship'.⁴⁷⁷ Paul Barber, in his study on vampirism, likewise stressed that in the absence of 'a proper grounding in physiology, pathology, and immunology', people's reaction was 'to blame death on the dead, who are apt to be observed closely for clues as to how they accomplish their mischief'.⁴⁷⁸ Terry Gunnell, in his research into medieval Icelandic revenant hauntings, observed that these stories reflected 'first and foremost, a rural community trying

⁴⁷² Johann Christoph Harenberg, *Vernünfftige und Christliche Gedancken Über die Vampirs oder Bluhtsaugende Todten, So unter den Türcken und auf den Gräntzen des Servien-Landes den lebenden Menschen und Viehe das Bluht aussaugen sollen: Begleitet mit allerley theologischen, philosophischen und historischen aus dem Reiche der Geister hergeholtten Anmerckungen Und entworfen Von Johann Christoph Harenberg, Rect. der Stifts-Schule zu Gandersheim* (Wolfenbüttel, 1733), 26.

⁴⁷³ Schöttgen, *Historie*, 661-3.

⁴⁷⁴ Schöttgen, *Historie*, 661-3. 'Es ist in pest Zeiten gar nichts ungewöhnliches (daß die Todten=Gräber vorgeben/ sie haben diesen und jenen Todten im Graben mit dem Maule schmatzen gehört... und sagen/ es bedeute/ der Todte werde noch mehr von seinen Freunden nachholen'.

⁴⁷⁵ Behm, *Drey Grossen Landtplagen*, 141-3 'als eine saw/ wenn sie isset'; Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 256.

⁴⁷⁶ Stockhausen, *Mira*, 85; Harenberg, *Vernünfftige und Christliche Gedancken*, 25; Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 260-1.

⁴⁷⁷ M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1984), 3-4.

⁴⁷⁸ Barber, *Vampires*, 3.

to explain and personify the recurrence of illness and bad luck'.⁴⁷⁹ With shroud-eaters, we can clearly see that attempt to seek signs in the behaviour of the corpse to elicit cause for a misfortune and as consequence ultimately of some moral or ritual breach.

One potential explanation focuses on the space of the corpse. The invasion of the corpse's space by an animal or other obstruction has been observed as a cause of revenancy in certain cultures, notably Bulgarian. One interpretation for this was the belief that nothing should obstruct the journey of the deceased's soul to the afterlife so therefore the space around it should be respected.⁴⁸⁰ Shroud-eating was a clear demonstration of this. The cause and symptoms of revenancy in this case were diagnosed by this behaviour and care was taken to ensure the shroud was not in the corpse's mouth. The rite of passage had been scotched by the failure to perform it correctly. Women were traditionally involved with this part of the funerary process.⁴⁸¹ A sermon delivered in 1584 by Johann Pilich (1544-1611), a minister in Jüterborg, corroborated this angle. He condemned those who attributed the plague ravaging his area, to the activities of a shroud-eater, as well as the solutions they implemented:

They pretend it is a person, died of the plague, buried the wrong way, that is eating in the grave, and causes with its eating those deaths, and the dying will not stop until it is taken from the grave to have its neck cut through with a spade.⁴⁸²

He criticised the view, held by his parishioners, that botched burial rites were responsible for the spirit and plague that followed. Instead, he blamed the sins of the wider community for having brought this punishment down on them.

The question of sin is an interesting one here as it was a vital issue when dealing with this type of revenancy. Certain shroud eaters were clearly evil as with the witch of Levin.⁴⁸³

⁴⁷⁹ T. Gunnell, 'Waking the Dead: Folk Legends concerning Magicians and Walking Corpses in Iceland', in M. Kaplan and T.R. Tangherlini (eds), *News from Other Worlds: Studies in Nordic Foklore, Mythology and Culture in Honor of John F. Lindow* (Berkeley, CA: North Pinehurst Press, 2012), 260-1.

⁴⁸⁰ B.A. McClelland, *Slayers and Their Vampires: A Cultural History of Killing the Dead* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2006), 53-4.

⁴⁸¹ Koslofsky, *Reformation*, 126.

⁴⁸² Johann Pilich, *Drey Predigten Zum eingang des neuen Jahrs Von dem truebseligen kleglichen vnd erbermlichen zustand des alten vergangenen Jars Wie der liebe Gott die Einwoner zu Jueterbock mit einer erschrecklichen Pestilenz ... gestrafft Vnd wie sie sich im werenden Sterben verhalten Was man auch aus solcher straffe lernen ... soll. Sampt kurtzer verzeichnis wie viel ... gestorben sind. ... Gehalten Durch M. Iohannem Pilichium Pfarherrn daselbst zu vnser lieben Frawen vnd Moenchen* (Wittenberg, 1585). 'Sie geben für es sey ein Mensch, an der Pestilenz gestorben, unrecht begraben worden, der fresse im Grabe umb sich, und ursache mit solchem fressen das sterben, und fresse die Leute nach sich und könne das sterben nicht ehe auffhören und nachlassen bis man in aus Grabe und den Hals mit der Spate absteche'.

⁴⁸³ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 257-8.

However, this was known, and this was the reason why she was buried at the crossroads rather than the graveyard, a measure which still failed to stop the pollution emanating from her corpse.⁴⁸⁴ With many others, it was far less apparent that the person had lived an evil life. At one level, it provided the chance to slander the dead and encourage rumour and gossip that a person chewed in their graves because of their immorality. It was precisely this charge that Luther and other Protestant writers rejected. In Luther's Table Talk, there is the account of a George Hörer writing to the reformer about the case of a woman who 'was eating herself in her grave' with many dying in his community. Luther wrote back to tell him that 'it was not a spirit or soul but the Devil himself'.⁴⁸⁵ Instead of being caused by one individual's sins, it was caused by all of those of the parish and he recommended that they all go to church and pray for deliverance and forgiveness. In this specific case, it sat at odds with the traditional expectation that the dead reappeared, or the devil in their form, due to some sin on that individual's part. Rather it implied devilish trickery at a time of existential crisis for a community. Luther sought to bind a community closer together through solidarity rather than by searching for scapegoats. It was the Devil's aim to stir up discord. Martin Behm, in his sermon on pestilence, maintained this orthodox Lutheran position. It wasn't the soul of the person with some evil intent on their part as the soul could not exist in a dead body, never mind make it chew or bite.⁴⁸⁶ Instead, it was the Devil, who typically for an evil spirit, preferred to work in dark places and holes. By appearing in the guise of Samuel, he did not detract from the goodness of the prophet. Likewise, he could inhabit the corpse of good people without bringing any harm upon their souls which were safe with God.⁴⁸⁷

Standard Lutheran advice recommended that the grave should not be opened, that the corpse should not be mutilated or destroyed. Christian Schöttgen, writing in 1717, drew attention to the Devil's wish that people would open graves and thus cause more deaths by releasing poisonous vapours from plague-ridden corpses.⁴⁸⁸ However, the teacher Michael Freud (1620-1692) made a more pertinent observation when he stated that 'the devil does it for this reason, that he will blemish and make an evil name for those lying in the grave as if

⁴⁸⁴ Praetorius, *Anthropodemvs*, 319-20.

⁴⁸⁵ Luther, *Tischreden*, 6: 214. 'es wäre kein Gespenst oder Seele, sondern wäre der Teufel selbs'.

⁴⁸⁶ Behm, *Drey Grossen Landtplagen*, 142.

⁴⁸⁷ Behm, *Drey Grossen Landtplagen*, 143.

⁴⁸⁸ Schöttgen, *Histoire*, 662.

they were such evil people'.⁴⁸⁹ Exhuming the dead and destroying their corpses would have left irreparable scars upon a community.

The Six-Weeker (*Sechswöchnerin*) revenant was a supernatural trope found in Germany, very much grounded in the female realms of pollution, guilt and contagion. It drew an intimate link between the grave and the bed. It involved the belief that a woman who died within six weeks of childbirth would return and feed off the life energy of her new-born.⁴⁹⁰ Until she was churched, a ritual that survived the Reformation, she remained impure and potentially dangerous.⁴⁹¹ It was believed that 'not only the soul but also the body of the dead woman comes back to the child's bed at night and in the morning, goes back to her grave'.⁴⁹² The trope endured throughout the early modern period in Germany. In the eighteenth century, Johann Georg Schmidt (1660-1722), in his work on superstition, recorded how still in Saxony a piece of almond wood or book would be placed in the bed of a woman who had died as a preventative measure against this spirit.⁴⁹³

It was clearly an attempt to assign cause to maternal and infant mortality. The mother was extremely susceptible to death through postpartum infection and the child was very much dependent on the mother's nurturing in those critical early days of life. Meanwhile, the child itself may not have been baptised and was therefore not a full member of the community. Paul Barber, on his work on vampirism, described how in the absence of medical knowledge, that contagion was understood 'as meaningful and deliberate' with 'patterns based on values and vendettas' rather than biology.⁴⁹⁴ In Scandinavia for example, the dead could sicken a

⁴⁸⁹ Freud, *Gewissens=Fragen*, 191-2. 'es thuts der Teuffel auch darumb/ daß er die Leute/ so in den Gräbern ligen/ schandflecke/ und ihnen einen bösen Nahmen mache/ als weren sie etwa so böse Leute gewesen'.

⁴⁹⁰ Münster, *Christlicher Unterricht* (1591), 19.

⁴⁹¹ Dixon, *Reformation and Rural Society*, 168; A.H.B. Skjelbred, 'Rites of Passage as Meeting Place: Christianity and Fairylure in Connection with the Unclean Woman and the Unchristened Child', in Narváez (ed.), *Good People*, 216-18.

⁴⁹² Münster, *Christlicher Unterricht* (1591), 19. 'nicht alleine die Seelen/ sondern auch die Leibe der Verstorbenen Frauen im kindbetter wider herfurkennen das Nachts: Des Morgens aber wider zu ihren Grabern giengen'.

⁴⁹³ Johann Georg Schmidt, *Die Gestriegelte Rocken-Philosophia, Oder Auffrichtige Untersuchung derer Von vielen super-klugen Weibern hochgehaltenen Aberglauben, Allen denen nützlich zu lesen, die entweder schon ehemals von ein und andern Aberglauben betrogen worden sind, oder noch betrogen werden können; an das Licht gestellt / von dem der einem jedweden die Wahrheit Ins Gesicht Saget* (Chemnitz, 1707-1709), 59.

⁴⁹⁴ Barber, *Vampires*, 178.

surviving relative through an 'elsk', a longing usually erotic in nature but one that played on ties of love between the dead and living.⁴⁹⁵

It was a dreadful accusation, that a woman who had given her life for her child, would then return and either through malice or longing, destroy it. Instead of nurturing the child, she vampirised it. The bed of childbirth and infancy was substituted for an evil cradling from the grave. She assumed the binary of an anti-mother, a trope normally reserved for women who either aborted their offspring in their womb or killed them soon after birth for their own selfish reasons. Through no fault of her own, she now assumed a similar role to other malevolent spirits such as Lilith, or Adam's first wife, that preyed on children and nurseries.⁴⁹⁶ In addition, it threw into question her own salvation. Signs indicative of salvation or damnation were sought in the behaviour of the living person, just prior to death and in the state and movements of their corpse afterwards. Johann Schmidt highlighted the incompatibility of this belief with Christian dogma. 'If the woman who has recently given birth dies blest, her body in the grave will suffer no unrest: But if she is damned, only her soul will suffer till it is reunited with the body'.⁴⁹⁷ For him, no agency could be attributed to either the soul, which was now beyond this world or the body, which lay rotting in the grave.

The most compelling cause of revenancy was not that the person was evil but rather they had been denied the appropriate rites of death or that these had been carried out incorrectly. The danger was that the power and pollution of the corpse had not been properly decommissioned. Traditional funerary rites of passage failed in these cases precisely because they were not adequate in dealing with the potential for pollution inherent within that person. A notorious sinner, such as a suicide, would normally be subject to special treatment

⁴⁹⁵ R. Kvideland and H.K. Sehmsdorf (eds), *Scandinavian Folk Belief and Legend* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 58.

⁴⁹⁶ Gottlieb Sigmund Corvinus, *Nutzbares, galantes und curioses Frauenzimmer-Lexicon : Worinnen nicht nur Der Frauenzimmer geistlich- und weltliche Orden, Aemter, Würden, Ehren-Stellen, Professionen und Gewerbe, ... Nahmen und Thaten der Göttinnen, ... gelehrter Weibes-Bilder ..., auch anderer ... Trachten und Moden, ... Gewohnheiten und Gebräuche, ... Ergötzlichkeiten, ... Gebrechen ... und alles ..., was einem Frauenzimmer vorkommen kan, und ihm nöthig zu wissen, Sondern auch Ein vollkommenes und auf die allerneueste Art verfertigtes Koch- Torten- und Gebackens-Buch, Samt denen darzu gehörigen Rissen, Taffel-Auffsätzen und Küchen-Zettuln, Ordentlich nach dem Alphabet ... abgefaßt ... dem weiblichen Geschlechte insgesamt zu sonderbaren Nutzen, Nachricht und Ergötzlichkeit auff Begehren ausgestellt / Von Amaranthes* (Leipzig, 1715), 1159.

⁴⁹⁷ Schmidt, *Gestriegelte Rocken-Philosophia*, 61. 'die Wöchernin selig verschieden/ so wird ihr Leichnam in Grabe keine unruhe leiden: ist sie aber verdammt/ so leidet ja nur die Seele/ biß der Leib wieder mit ihr vereiniget würde'.

through exclusion from the communal cemetery, ritual mutilation of the corpse and/or its physical destruction. However, a secret sinner, a person whose crimes were hidden by their family, or even just one who unfairly secured through influence and wealth a privilege their morality did not warrant, were causes for concern. This can be demonstrated when we look at the most famous of these revenant stories found in both German and English texts where this angle was emphasised over others.

Stephen Hübner was a rich citizen of Trautenau in Bohemia whose death in 1567 was immediately followed by sightings of him attacking locals. The origins of his great wealth raised questions which no one could account for.⁴⁹⁸ One potential answer was a satanic pact though we should also consider charity or the perceived lack of it being a key factor in the background of this story. George Sinclair (d.1696), the Glasgow mathematician, recorded the story of an apothecary in Reichenbach in Silesia who after his death appeared to his acquaintances to admit to having been a poisoner. His body was exhumed and burnt. Interestingly, the tale that preceded this in Sinclair's *Invisible World* was that of Christopher Monig, another apothecary who appeared after his death in Crossen in Silesia in 1659. The authorities sought to discern the cause of the haunting by having his corpse exhumed and examining it for signs but as it was 'putrified with purulent matter flowing from it', they instead recommended that all his things be thrown out of his old house instead.⁴⁹⁹

Another tale was that of the shoemaker of Silesia who cut his own throat in September 1591. His family, 'to cover the foulness of the Fact, and that no disgrace might come upon his Widow', told everyone he had died of apoplexy, which afforded him 'a decent Burial with a Funeral Sermon, and other Circumstances becoming one of his Rank and Reputation'. Six weeks later rumours circulated that his death was self-inflicted, an accusation rejected by the family, but one that led to calls for his exhumation and treatment 'as if he had been a magician or self-murderer'. It was 'whilst these Things were in agitation' that his spectre started to appear and terrorise the community.⁵⁰⁰ One can clearly see a rumour mill in operation here,

⁴⁹⁸ Praetorius, *Anthropodemvs*, 317-8; Grosse, *Magica*, 57; Heinrich Roch, *Neue Laußnitz- Böh- und Schlesische Chronica, Oder Allerhand Denck- und Merckwürdiger Unglücks- und Trauer-Fälle, so sich in dem Marggraffthum Lausitz ... in den nechsten dreyhundert und Sechs und Achtzig Jahren begeben und zugetragen: Theils aus gelehrter Leute Schrifftten ... in eine richtige Jahrgängige Landschafft-Ordnung gebracht und auffgesetzt / Von Heinrico Roch, J.C. & Reip. Pat. Senatore* (Leipzig, 1687), 50-1.

⁴⁹⁹ Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World*, 87-9.

⁵⁰⁰ Burton, *Kingdom*, 34-8.

with doubts concerning his death backed up by reports of his bodily apparitions only confirming what certain locals had suspected. Ultimate proof was sought in the condition of his corpse and the solution achieved by its destruction.

The death of Johannes Cuntius of Pentsch in Silesia, a prominent alderman of the town, was caused after he was struck by a horse's hoof. Again, one detects an undercurrent of suspicion, and possibly a whiff of sulphur for one who had 'grown beyond all expectation rich' despite being 'unblameable to appearance in the whole Course of his Life'. Foreknowledge of his own impending death suggested a satanic pact run its course. His composure broke on his deathbed, complaining how 'I burn and am all on fire!' Despite these and other clear indications of his damnation, he was buried on the right side of the altar and from February to July that year, the town was plagued by an evil spirit until his body was taken up and destroyed.⁵⁰¹

The story of Michael Caspareck, set in 1718 in Lublov in modern Slovakia, was potentially the most colourful of these legendary revenants as he managed to get his widow pregnant as well as travel to Warsaw on business while plaguing his community. Perhaps this very colour indicated a more folkloric tradition. It was indeed a story that invited ridicule to the educated writer recording it, one whose roots lay in jealousy and the undeserved slander of a wealthy man, the basis of many such tales:

One sees from this story the wickedness and reckless purpose of the originator and contriver of such ghost stories, and that they do not baulk at arousing horrible slander against respectable and pleasant people after their death.⁵⁰²

Jan Perkowski pushed the idea that the undead corpse underwent a 'daemonic contamination' in the early modern period, where it assumed the characteristics and tropes of other supernatural creatures alongside its own.⁵⁰³ This might also explain why certain revenants were more active and colourful in their activities than others as demonstrated in

⁵⁰¹ Burton, *Kingdom*, 39-46.

⁵⁰² Eberhard David Hauber, *Bibliotheca, Acta et Scripta Magica: Gründliche Nachrichten und Urtheile Von solchen Büchern und Handlungen, Welche Die Macht des Teufels in leiblichen Dingen betreffen; Zur Ehre Gottes, und dem Dienst der Menschen heraus gegeben / Von Eberhard David Hauber* (Lemgo, 1739), 711-18 'Man siehet aber aus dieser Erzählung die Bosheit und leichtfertige Absicht der Urheber und Erfinder solcher Geister=historien, und daß sie sich nicht scheuen ehrlichen und angesehenen Leuten nach dem Tod solche erschreckliche Lästerungen zu erwecken'.

⁵⁰³ D. Keyworth, *Troublesome Corpses: Vampires and Revenants from Antiquity to the Present* (Southend-on-Sea: Desert Island Books, 2007), 97.

the tales of Johannes Cuntius and Michael Caspareck where multiple supernatural tropes were present in the legends.

Which brings us to our point, that among the functions of these revenant tales, affirmation of the sacred space of the place of burial for the community was probably the most important. Only those who deserved inclusion in the graveyard should be buried there. Anyone whose morality was seriously suspect, even if they were an influential figure in the community, should be excluded and denied a Christian burial as they posed a threat to the purity of the cemetery. The graveyard itself could become polluted, the corpse of the sinner the source and cause through which the evil was let in which would then ravage a community with plague and death. Spreading from the grave, death would first strike those nearest in life to the deceased before its tentacles reached further. The safety of the community trumped individual or family honour. One could argue that the funeral and death rites had no bearing on the fate of the soul as the person was already damned and no amount of ritual could save them. That would be missing the point, however. The predations of these revenants occurred precisely because they were granted rites they did not deserve. If they had been treated with exclusion, stake and fire at the start, there would have been no grounds for these vampiric rampages to occur. Sacred space, ritual and morality combined to define the standards of the community. Revenant stories affirmed these, just as other stories of the indignant dead or saints evicting sinners from their graves, or corpses exhibiting awful signs which denied them burial did.

Portents, Ghostly Funeral Processions and Corpse Candles

Graveyards were sites traditionally associated with portents of death, either for the wider community warning of plague and great mortalities or concerning the imminent demise of individuals. Signs could occur at the individual grave itself, in the general burial place or along the route to the graveyard, most usually tracing a path from the residence of the one who would die to the cemetery.

There was the famous legend concerning the bones of Pope Sylvester II (946-1003) that would rattle in their tomb whenever a pontiff would die.⁵⁰⁴ In Marienburg, ten weeks before a plague, there was rumbling and banging in the churches at night ‘as when corpses are buried and lots of earth is poured over their coffins’.⁵⁰⁵ The sound of graves being dug at night was another portent of death in country villages.⁵⁰⁶ In July 1624, the sighting of two spirits resembling town dignitaries emerging from the elderberry bushes in the graveyard of the town of Calbe around midday was taken to be a warning of a plague that soon followed.⁵⁰⁷

Dances of dead men or *Todtentanzen* were a ghostly trope, more specific to Germany, which warned of imminent great mortalities. Lavater mentioned how the pranks of ‘certayne plesaunt yong men’ who danced about a churchyard in Zürich, ‘one of them playing on a beere with two bones, as it were on a drumme’, raised a panic among the citizenry who thought they had ‘seene dead men daunce’ and ‘that there was greate daunger, least there should shortly ensue some plague or pestilence’.⁵⁰⁸ It could also apparently apply to individual deaths. The late thirteenth and early fourteenth-century Dominican prior Rudolf von Schlettstadt, whose stories survived in the sixteenth-century Zimmern Chronicle, recounted the tale of a corrupt provost of Basel cathedral who saw a dance in a graveyard from his bedroom window and later died.⁵⁰⁹ The demonologist Ludwig Milich (1530-1575) noted how on St. Matthew’s Night (21 September) people would go to graveyards to see if they could identify the spectre of anyone in these *Todtentanzen*.⁵¹⁰ Potentially, it was similar to the belief in England that, by observing the apparitions of those who approached the church porch on Midsummer’s Eve, one would know who would die that year in the parish.⁵¹¹ Georg Paul Hönn

⁵⁰⁴ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 236-7.

⁵⁰⁵ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 962. ‘als wenn man Leichen in die Erde senckere und haufig die erde auff die Särge hernach schüttete’.

⁵⁰⁶ Stockhausen, *Mira*, 77.

⁵⁰⁷ Johann Heinrich Hävecker, *M. Johann Heinrich Häveckers, Königl. Preußis. Inspector. zu Calbe und Past. Primarii daselbst, kurtz gefaste Chronica und Beschreibung Der Städte Calbe, Acken und Wantzleben Wie auch des Closters Gottes-Gnade Sambt der darzu gehörigen Amt-Häusern, Dörffer, Kirchen und Predigern Calbischer Inspection, im Holtz-Creyß Des Hertzogthums Magdeburg, Darbey allerhand alte Documenta, Nachrichten und denckwürdige Begebenheiten, mit grossen Nutz zu lessen* (Halberstadt, 1720), 386-7.

⁵⁰⁸ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 22.

⁵⁰⁹ Rudolf von Schlettstadt, *Historiae Memorabiles: Zur Dominikanerliteratur und Kulturgeschichte des 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. E. Kleinschmidt (Cologne: Böhlau, 1974), 72.

⁵¹⁰ Ludwig Milich, *Der Zauber Teuffel: Das ist, von Zauberey, Warsagung, Beschwehren, Segen, Aberglauben, Hexerey, und mancherley Wercken deß Teuffels ... Durch Ludovicum Milichium*. (Frankfurt am Main, 1564), 308-9.

⁵¹¹ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 26, 97.

(1662-1747), in his dictionary of scams, described how gravediggers would spread rumours that they had seen the spectre of one still living in the cemetery, but fated to die soon, to cause distress.⁵¹² The apparition of the living in the place of the dead, particularly at liminal times, signalled that either they were soon to die or that they were already partly in that realm of death.

The belief existed in Germany and various parts of the British Isles that ghostly signs could be seen between the house of those about to die and the graveyard. In Germany, this was most often in the form of spectral funeral processions or *Leichprocession*. Relays of lights were recorded as being seen in Wales and Ireland. The Brabant-born demonologist Johann Wier noted several portents of death, one of which was 'the somberely clad train of a funeral procession as yet unrecognised but destined to occur'.⁵¹³ Ludwig Lavater, the Protestant expert on ghost belief, mentioned how processions were seen 'going solemnlie with the corps, according to the custome of the people, or standing before the doores, as if some bodie were to be carried to the Church to burying'.⁵¹⁴ It was believed that if one saw one's own double in these processions, and did not die soon afterwards, that it meant one would live long.⁵¹⁵ Lavater noted how people would understand 'their owne image' as 'theyr owne soule'.

Erasmus Francisci also recorded ghostly funerals in the late seventeenth century as one of the many preternatural warnings of death.⁵¹⁶ Johann Bräuner, in his work published posthumously in 1737, recorded how in Sarganz county, on the Warthau estate, a ghostly silent hearse dragged by oxen would be seen at midday heading along the road to the church, at which wall it would disappear. This apparition would be seen 'when a man in the barony, who was a little in consideration, would die'. He specifically noted that although the area belonged to the reformed faith, one which normally disavowed such superstition, that belief in this apparition was still strong.⁵¹⁷ On St John's Eve 1706, a ghostly funeral procession was

⁵¹² Georg Paul Hönn, *Betrugs-Lexikon, worinnen die meisten Betrügereyen in allen Ständen nebst denen darwider guten Theils dienenden Mitteln entdecket von Georg Paul Hönn, Zweyte und vermehrte Edition* (Coburg, 1721), 424.

⁵¹³ Wier, *Witches*, 76.

⁵¹⁴ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 79.

⁵¹⁵ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 79; Stockhausen, *Mira*, 77-8.

⁵¹⁶ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 255-6.

⁵¹⁷ Bräuner, *Physicalisch- und Historisch-Erörterte Curiositæten*, 373-4. 'wann ein Mann in der Herrschafft, so ein wenig in *Consideration* ist, sterben soll'.

seen from the window of a Christian Losen in the town of Wurzen coming from Crostigal. In August and September dysentery raged through the settlement, carrying away up to eighty people.⁵¹⁸ The fourteen-year-old daughter of a prominent citizen of Wurzen reported that in February 1707, at two in the morning, while she was watching her father's laden wagon, a spectral funeral procession emerged from a specific house and passed her by on the way to the graveyard. In front of the coffin went a tall man wearing mourning costume with a wand, followed by a long train of men and women while the girl's dog whimpered under the wagon. Christian Schöttgen, the chronicler who included this tale, remarked that this time nothing untoward followed and wanted to make this point to free people from 'a groundless and unnecessary fear'.⁵¹⁹ A more vivid example recounted a tale, attributed to the Italian humanist Girolamo Cardano, about apparitions of fiery peasants running behind a burning cart and oxen rushing towards the city of Galerat before disappearing into the earth near the castle gate. A terrible plague soon followed.⁵²⁰

Richard Baxter, the English Puritan churchman, is our main seventeenth-century source for corpse candle belief in Wales.⁵²¹ It was a tradition that was recorded in the eighteenth century by the minister Edmund Jones (1702-1793) in his work on Welsh apparitions and mentioned also by John Aubrey.⁵²² It shared similarities to *Leichprocession* in Germany. Instead of the apparition of a funeral train, lights were seen. Known locally as 'Dead mens Candles', Baxter's informant admitted that the belief was

ordinary in most of our Counties, that I scarce heard of any sort, Young or Old, but this is seen before Death, and often observed to part from the very Bodies of the persons all along the way to the place of Burial.⁵²³

⁵¹⁸ Schöttgen, *Historie*, 677-8.

⁵¹⁹ Schöttgen, *Historie*, 680-1. 'von einer ungegründeten und unnöthigen Furcht zu befreien'.

⁵²⁰ Pen Neer the Covent of Eluthery, *A Pleasant Treatise of Witches their Imps, and Meetings, Persons Bewitched, Magicians, Necromancers, Incubus, and Succubus's, Familiar Spirits, Goblins, Pharys, Specters, Phantasms, Places Haunted, and Devillish Impostures: With the Difference between Good and Bad Angels, and a True Relation of a Good Genius / by a Pen neer the Covent of Eluthery* (London, 1673), 73.

⁵²¹ Baxter, *Certainty*, 128-46.

⁵²² Edmund Jones, *The Appearance of Evil: Apparitions of Spirits in Wales. Edited with an Introduction by John Harvey* (Cardiff: University of Cardiff Press, 2003), 8, 53-4, 56-7; John Aubrey, *Miscellanies Upon Various Subjects By John Aubrey, Esq. F.R.S. A New Edition with considerable Improvements to which is prefixed some Account of his Life* (London, 1784), 231-5.

⁵²³ Baxter, *Certainty*, 131.

It was a portent of death and the number and size of the lights seen indicated the number and age of the fatalities soon to follow.⁵²⁴ The informant recalled that the wife of his parish sexton saw, on two separate occasions, small candles which betokened the death of infants soon after.⁵²⁵ Another account described a light hovering on a riverbank in Lanylar and the subsequent drowning, a few weeks later in the exact same spot, of a woman from Montgomeryshire while attempting to ford the river.⁵²⁶ The final story was located in Llangathen in Carmarthenshire, thirty or forty years before the informant, a Mr Davis, wrote this in 1656. He claimed that five such lights were seen in a chamber where the maids of a house slept together and that not long after this spectacle, the five young women who slept there died of carbon dioxide poisoning.⁵²⁷ In contrast to the demonic nature of many hauntings pushed in print, these corpse candles were not construed at a local level as deceptive but rather indicated a process that would soon unfold. They did not occur in the wild or move around erratically as the will-o'-the-wisp did, but rather followed the same route the corpse did, happened at the site where death would occur and even, on occasion, appeared inside houses and rooms.

There were a couple of tantalising hints of similar belief elsewhere in the British Isles. However, no mention was made of the graveyard. Glanvill recorded a home in Suffolk where, before a death, music would be heard 'to go from the house...playing all along,' which people would follow and 'observed it to pass through the field till it came to a Wood, and there they left or lost it'.⁵²⁸ He also noted how 'sometimes the appearance of lights presages the Death of some of a family, and the number according to the number of Lights'. He gave a specific instance of this happening 'to a family of great Quality' in Ireland, several years before, when 'three Lights dancing upon a place they call Fairy-Mount' were spied. Three people subsequently died.⁵²⁹ In England in 1722, we also find a pamphlet describing a ghostly funeral procession of headless men, witnessed by a sentry, proceeding towards the house of the Duke of Buckingham, on the night of 13th January.⁵³⁰ However, the Duke was already dead, so this

⁵²⁴ Baxter, *Certainty*, 138.

⁵²⁵ Baxter, *Certainty*, 139.

⁵²⁶ Baxter, *Certainty*, 138-9.

⁵²⁷ Baxter, *Certainty*, 141; Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 234.

⁵²⁸ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 410

⁵²⁹ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 411.

⁵³⁰ Anon, *The St James's Surprizing and Afrightful Apparition* (London, 1722).

was hardly a portent. Likewise, in the 1588 English translation of Noel Taillepied, which in the original published in France had been a work aimed at rebutting Lavater's *De Spectriis*, the timing of these processions of 'a forlorn train of shadowy folk' occurred after the funeral, when they went 'in sombre and slow procession to the new-made grave'.⁵³¹

Looking at these stories, it is tempting to see elements whereby the lights do reflect the soul, not least by the size and number factor, and potentially reflect the belief that death was a process which occurred not in an instant but over a longer duration. We have already examined how lights were often understood to be souls, especially within a Catholic context. Death and the afterlife were not merely changes of state but also changes of place. The idea of a journey to the underworld has been a central feature of human thanatological thinking.⁵³² We find a vivid example of death journeys in Aubrey's description of the folk beliefs in Yorkshire that 'after the person's death, the Soule went over Whinny-moore'.⁵³³ The song recording this belief spoke clearly of a physical journey that commenced at death and involved crossing Whinny-moore and the 'Brig O' Dread' before reaching the destination of 'Purgatory Fire'. Each point on the journey was studded by a test that either made continued progress very difficult or potentially, though it was unsaid, blocked it. To cross the moors safely, one needed the trousers and shoes that one had given the poor in life. The 'Brig O' Dread' was 'no brader than a thread', implying that one could fall off it. The giving of 'Milke or Drinke' in life were vital to pass through Purgatory. The journey to the Otherworld was engraven upon a landscape of charity. It is not inconceivable that we can see here the influence of medieval preaching motifs, linked to the local landscape, persisting into the seventeenth century at a popular level in Yorkshire. In the satirical Elizabethan text *Tarltons Newes out of Purgatorie* (1590), we can see parts of this journey mapped out.⁵³⁴ The idea of a death journey persisted into the eighteenth century, certainly at a figurative level in preaching tropes steeped in biblical imagery and recorded by Henry Bourne who mentioned the journey of the soul 'through the valley of death to the everlasting hills', shepherded on its

⁵³¹ Taillepied, *Treatise*, 86.

⁵³² C. Zaleski, *Otherworld Journeys: Accounts of Near-Death Experience in Medieval and Modern Times* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

⁵³³ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 31-32.

⁵³⁴ Richard Tarlton, *Tarltons Newes out of Purgatorie Onely such a iest as his Jigge, fit for Gentlemen to laugh at an Houre, &c. Published by an old Companion of his, Robin Goodfellow* (London, 1590), 4-5.

way by good angels.⁵³⁵ Going to the graveyard would have been the first step on this road. In Whinny-moore, we have an entire journey. In *Leichprocession* and Welsh corpse candles, possibly we are looking at the start of the trip before the person had fully left the realm of the living but still had a foot in either domain. Their destination was the place of the dead, the graveyard. In cases where there were more lights or apparitions than dead, one wonders in the folk-tradition if the newly-departed were either being collected or indeed welcomed into their new place and state of existence by other spirits. In Brittany, legends about the *Ankou* or cart driven by Death, which collected the newly dead, persisted well into modern times.⁵³⁶ Reginald Scot referred to the 'hell waine' in the late sixteenth century and it is tempting to see this perform the same function. However, little direct evidence remains aside from the name.⁵³⁷ What was important were that these were signs to be read prospectively, or retrospectively, that a death would or had occurred. The importance of the graveyard, as destination for the route these signs would follow, was also reaffirmed.

A Haunted Place of Power

Francis Grose in his 1787 work described how churchyard ghosts had been reduced to a state of 'no particular business, but seem to appear *pro bono publico* or to scare drunken rustics from tumbling over their graves'.⁵³⁸ In contrast to many of the spirits found in late seventeenth century English texts, the spirits that appeared among the graves appeared to have no purpose other than embodying the ignorance of the rural mindset. This section has shown that clearly, this was not the case and that stories of hauntings and supernatural activity in the graveyard served certain functions.

They affirmed the purity and power of the site and in turn the desirability of burial in the graveyard. To have a place in the cemetery meant that one had to conform to the morality of the wider community. This, in turn, was then a good indication regarding the chance of salvation in the afterlife and on the last day. Exclusion meant that in life, in death, and in the

⁵³⁵ Bourne, *Antiquitates*, 7-8.

⁵³⁶ Badone, *Appointed Hour*, 4-5, 160-2; Devlin, *Superstitious Mind*, 81-2.

⁵³⁷ Scot, *Discoverie*, 86.

⁵³⁸ Grose, *Provincial Glossary*, 9-10.

afterlife, that one was not part of the group. One would not greet the day of resurrection in the same place as one's kith and kin but as an outcast, awaiting an even more terrible judgement. As such, stories of ghosts would confirm the power of those who mediated access to the site, who granted permission for burial and administered the final rites of passage.

Graveyard ghosts also contributed to a construction of Catholicism as the antithesis of true religion, a ghost-ridden creed unhealthily preoccupied with death and the bones of so-called saints. It was one that had played on fear, on false apparitions, on grief and its legacy still lingered on in the minds of the unlearned, the lower classes and those still under the sway of popery abroad. Indeed, in Germany in particular, there had been a movement to locate new burial grounds away from the old churchyards, lying at the centre of their communities.⁵³⁹ Appeal was made to reasons of hygiene and space, though it was as likely that it was to move them from the places of power which papistry had made their own.

Could one say that under Protestantism, the graveyard became a less scary or less spirit infested space? Reginald Scot made the claim in the 1580s, that under popery 'a polled sheepe is a perillous beast, and manie times is taken for our fathers soule speciallie in a churchyard where a right hardie man heretofore scant durst passe by night, but his haire would stand upright'.⁵⁴⁰ Likewise, the preacher Anton Otto (1505-1565/1588) would decry the spirits one encountered in the time of Catholicism, when bones would rattle, apparitions materialise and poltergeists play havoc with the remains of the dead.⁵⁴¹

Looking at the evidence in this section, I would say no. The graveyard wasn't any less haunted. Nor was it in any way less frightening. It continued as a site of power, one where apparitions and portents warned of imminent death. It was a place, where in Germany belief persisted that the evil dead continued to fester with malevolent agency beneath the earth, bringing death to those closest to them in life. One could posit that by demonising Purgatorial spectres in one of the prime places they were accredited as appearing, one was making it a far more fear-ridden place. No longer were there the saints to protect the dead. No longer loved ones

⁵³⁹ Koslofsky, *Reformation*, 40-77.

⁵⁴⁰ Scot, *Discoverie*, 86.

⁵⁴¹ Anton Otto, *Einfalt: Von den Newen Rumpelgeistern, so mit der Erbsünde und Gesetz auff die Kirchhöfe, in die Greber unter die Leichnam und in die Beinheuser der Knochen der Christglaubigen, so im Herrn selig gestorben, in ihren Schlaffkämmerlein sanfft rügen, in Christo auß gnaden, Gerecht, Heylig, Lebendig, Selig und Herrlich für Gott ... seint, Rumpeln* (1583).

to interact at the graveside. However, this might be taking too literally the rhetoric of the Reformation as a measure of its success at penetrating the minds of the people and establishing a demonic interpretation of the apparition over earlier beliefs, typically castigated as Catholic, where the ghost was the soul. It was one Peter Marshall pondered over, questioning whether 'Protestant teaching in its purest form was simply too cruelly counter-intuitive ever fully to take root in the popular consciousness'.⁵⁴²

The same anxieties over place continued and were addressed in tales and stories about ghosts alongside more practical and religious measures. Persistence of tropes that appeared in the medieval texts such as the expulsion of the corpses of the impure or rattling, restless bones hint at the continuation of belief or rather the need to address the same anxieties about death and pollution found before and after the Reformation. Possibly, the campaign against atheism in the late seventeenth century where literary tales of spirits were collected, gave undue prominence to earlier tropes, now obsolete, a case of any old ghost in a storm. However, this still raises the question why such spirit tropes would be employed, if more than a century and a half of Protestant hegemony had not chased them from the popular consciousness and reduced them to the level of inanity. It only suggests that they or similar tropes, which embodied the same anxieties, persisted despite whatever theological veneer they were now varnished with.

There was a tale, recorded by Richard Baxter, of a Colchester man, 'who in a Bravado, and Defiance of the Devil, would walk in the Night to the Church-Yard, where it was reported he appeared and walked, and he met him in the shape of a Black Dog with terrible Eyes'.⁵⁴³ The spirits of Purgatory may have long fled and indeed been replaced by the spectres of atheism in the eyes of the devout, but the fear of the very place of the dead lived on.

⁵⁴² Marshall, *Beliefs*, 263.

⁵⁴³ Baxter, *Certainty*, 153.

The Haunted House

The haunted house is the oldest recorded ghost trope in western literature with underlying themes that would crop up recurrently. In *Mostellaria*, Plautus (c.254-184 BC) penned a comic play describing the antics of the slave Tranio covering up sexual and drunken excess by claiming the house in which the master's son dwelled was haunted by the spirit of a murdered guest which complained that 'This building is cursed, this dwelling is polluted by crime'.⁵⁴⁴ However, it was the younger Pliny's (61-c.113) account of a haunted house in Athens, exorcised by the philosopher Athenodorus, that proved the literary model for many subsequent writers. Lucian's (c.125-180) *Philopseudes* includes a tale of Arignotus cleansing a house in Corinth. With Christianity, we encounter tales of St Germanus of Auxerre (c.378-448) and Bishop Datius of Milan (d.552), both closely modelled on the figure and tale of Athenodorus but with a clear Christian slant, purging houses of spirits.⁵⁴⁵ In both pagan and Christian versions of the tale, we have a house cursed by murder (most probably of a guest and thus contravening the laws of hospitality) polluted further by the burial of the victim without the necessary rites. Whereas in the accounts of Pliny and Lucian, the house was purified by a philosopher who ensured the necessary funerary rites were carried out, in the stories about Germanus and Datius, it was the Christian bishop and his prayers that placated the restless spirits. In all the tales, the house was widely known to be haunted by the locals and even its appearance confirmed its cursed past in some versions. The popularity of this trope is proven by its persistence over time, its recurrence in texts and its ability to be reinterpreted by the author though stay true to the original narrative flow.

The belief that apparitions were seen in certain places more so than others tied in closely to Catholic belief regarding ghosts and Purgatory. As we have already seen, classical stories of haunted buildings had long before been subsumed within a Catholic model, the haunted houses purged by Athenodorus and Arignotus being instead cleansed by the ministrations of St. Germanus and Bishop Datius. Plutarch's (c.46-120) haunted baths of Chaeronea were in turn changed into the bathhouses haunted by the deacon Paschasius and the ghost that

⁵⁴⁴ D. Felton, *Haunted Greece and Rome: Ghost Stories from Classical Antiquity* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1999), 51-2.

⁵⁴⁵ D. Ogden, *Night's Black Agents: Witches Wizards and the Dead in the Ancient World* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2008), 105.

haunted the hot waters of Tauriana in Gregory's stories.⁵⁴⁶ As with so much of the classical tradition of the Mediterranean world, these stories were given a Christian veneer, while retaining traditional anxieties regarding place.

In early modern English and German sources, we come across many reports of haunted houses. This is despite the biblical injunction mentioned in the Book of Job regarding the dead which told how 'He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him anymore'.⁵⁴⁷ What is clear is that these properties were stigmatised. They had an evil reputation that persisted over time and were accepted within local memory as places to be avoided. Edson Hall near Alchester was 'a House famed to be haunted'.⁵⁴⁸ In Annandale, Powdine House, belonging to a Mr Johnston, was acknowledged in the year 1651 as having been haunted for at least 50 or 60 years, with the owner recounting to the writer of the 'many extraordinary Relations consisting in his own Knowledge' of 'Noises and apparitions, Drums and Trumpets heard before the last War'.⁵⁴⁹ Certain houses had rooms which were known to be haunted. A traveller who had a restless night in a hostelry in Culmstock, 1664, learnt soon after that the bedchamber was reputed to be haunted.⁵⁵⁰ A dwelling in Hessen, not far from Kirtdorff, was known to have 'a specific room in the house in which no one can sleep in peace'.⁵⁵¹ In the house of Mr Beecham in Branston in Rutland, 'it was frequently observed that a Tobacco-pipe would move itself from a Shelf at one end of the Room, to another Shelf at the other end of the Room, without any Hand'.⁵⁵² Similarly, in a Wustermarck rectory, the inhabitant told the author how 'for a few years something suspicious and unwholesome has been heard and sensed in the living room'.⁵⁵³ Samuel Pepys recalled in his diary for the 8-9th April 1661, that the room he would stay in Chatham, was reputedly haunted by his host's predecessor who 'did die and walk in my chamber'.⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁴⁶ Saur, *Theatrum*, 133; Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 9-11.

⁵⁴⁷ Job 7.10

⁵⁴⁸ Baxter, *Certainty*, 37.

⁵⁴⁹ Baxter, *Certainty*, 87-88.

⁵⁵⁰ Baxter, *Certainty*, 69-70.

⁵⁵¹ Freud, *Gewissens=Fragen*, 83-4. 'ein sonderbar Gespenst ein Zeitlang hat sehen lassen...Sonderlich hats eine besondere Kammer im Hause gehabt/ darinnnen es niemand mit Ruhe schlaffen lassen.'

⁵⁵² Baxter, *Certainty*, 155.

⁵⁵³ Wegner, *Philosophische Abhandlung*, 71. 'wie seit einigen Jahren sich etwas verdächtiges und ungewöhnliches in seiner Wohnstube habe hören und sphüren lassen'.

⁵⁵⁴ Pepys, *Shorter Pepys*, 126.

Local collective memory was often relied on to ascertain the veracity and nature of a haunting. Investigations into the haunting at Old Pell's House in Hannington near Northampton were complicated by the previous history, or lack of one, as the building was not 'within the Memory of man anyway haunted or disturbed, till within this Twelve-month last past, or there about'. The ghost that appeared claimed to have been that of a man murdered two hundred and sixty-seven years before but who had been laid by a friar for much of that time and thus beyond the range of living memory.⁵⁵⁵ A disturbance at a house in St Sepulchre's was linked to earlier supernatural activity at this site as 'Neighbours report that this house was haunted with spirits about a dozen years ago, and the spirits had been laid for a time, which it seems, is now expired'.⁵⁵⁶ Though debate has focused on the question of the typical early modern haunting being that of person rather than place, it was evident that local memory, indeed national memory too potentially, would associate the places with the preternatural events that occurred there and that site would long afterwards be stigmatised as haunted. There was a house at Bow belonging to a Paul Fox where apparitions were seen which 'was afterwards so ill haunted, in all the rooms, upper and lower, that it stood empty a long while after'.⁵⁵⁷ A similar case was the haunting of the house of Peter Pain, a shoemaker in St Mary Poel Street, Bristol, which occurred forty-five years before, but was 'still recent in the memories of the neighbours' in 1683.⁵⁵⁸ The collective memory would include servants, previous occupants, guests and neighbours. Richard Bovet, in his tale of a haunted former convent in the West Country, mentioned how he 'had often heard the Servants, and others that inhabited, or lodged there, speak much of the noises, stirs and Apparitions that frequently disturbed the House'. He appealed to 'the knowledge of those who have been inhabitants, or Lodgers in the said House, for what remains, to justify the Credibility of the rest' of his tale.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁵ Clark, *Rest-less ghost*, 4.

⁵⁵⁶ Anon, *A Most Strange and Dreadful Apparition of several Spirits & Visions at several times seen and spoken to, on the 14, 15, and 16th of this Instant July, 1680, at the House of Mr. John Thomas, Junior, next Door to the Sign of the Crown, at Cow Cross, in the Parish of St. Sepulchres, London: With many more Circumstances not here related, but will be certainly justified for Truths, by the (credible) Spectators* (London, 1680), 5.

⁵⁵⁷ Anon, *The Compleat Wizzard: Being a Collection of authentic and entertaining Narratives of the real Existence and Appearance of Ghosts, Demons, and Spectres: Together with several wonderful Instances of the Effects of Witchcraft. To which is prefixed, an Account of Haunted Houses, and subjoined a Treatise on the Effects of Magic* (London, 1770), 35.

⁵⁵⁸ Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 166.

⁵⁵⁹ Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 202, 206.

Similarly, the absence of a history of hauntedness could suggest that any current supernatural activity in the house was related to witchcraft or satanic instigation. It suggested that the history and reputation of the site had been evaluated as a factor in discerning the cause of any supernatural activity present on the site. The haunting of a house in Annaberg in August and September 1691 was described as a 'Hexengespenst' or 'witch's spirit'. The author of the pamphlet laid out clearly at the start of his narrative that the house where the haunting occurred had been bought legitimately by a minister who had rented it out to his wife's sister, a widow, who lived there devoutly, 'in complete peace and quiet for over a year and a day' before anything extraordinary occurred.⁵⁶⁰

Likewise, a memory of a haunting, that in theory was temporary as with supernatural activity caused by witchcraft, could persist long after the actual original event itself. This could be because the house had acquired a notoriety hard to shake off, due to the events that had transpired there. It could also be due to the persistence of whatever witchcraft had been used originally, one whose power was still potent. There was a house at Stratford Bow, within four miles of London, that Joseph Glanvill recorded had been haunted thirty years before. It was understood as the product of 'the mad frolicks of Witches and Daemons', one whose solution was sought in roasting the bedstaff of a suspected witch who had visited the house. Despite this, it was 'so ill haunted in all the rooms, upper and lower, that the House stood empty a long time after'.⁵⁶¹ The famous novelist, playwright and pamphleteer Thomas Nashe recounted the story of a nobleman whose house was haunted, sixty miles from London. He mentioned that 'it was noted over and besides to have been an unlucky house to all his predecessors, situated in a quarter not altogether exempted from witches'.⁵⁶² The stigmatised nature of the house was clear but the cause less so, whether it was some deed in the past, some continuing infestation to the present, or the presence of witches nearby.

⁵⁶⁰ Anon, *Eigentliche und warhafftige Erzehlung von dem Kobald/ Polter-Geist oder Hexen-Gespenst/ Welches sich bißhero zu St. Annaberg in einem wohl gebaueten Wohnhause vom 4. Augusti an biß zu Ende des Septembris dieses 1691sten Jahres/ so wohl am hellen Tage/ als des Nachts/ durch allerhand Unfug und gestifftete Ungelegenheit mercken und spüren lassen: Nebenst einem kleinen Vor- und Nachbericht/ Was von dergleichen Begebenheiten zu halten* (Leipzig, 1691). 'in aller Stille und Vergnügen über Jahr und Tag'.

⁵⁶¹ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 361-4.

⁵⁶² Nashe, *Unfortunate Traveller*, 246.

As previously mentioned, the memory of a death was often linked to place and attributed as the cause of haunting. Francis Grose gave a colourful insight into this belief relating to houses, though it is somewhat tainted by his prejudices against country folk:

The room in which the head of a family had died, was for a long time untenanted; particularly if they had died without a will, or were supposed to have entertained any particular religious opinions. But if any disconsolate old maiden, or love-crossed bachelor, happened to dispatch themselves in their garters, the room where the deed was perpetrated was rendered forever after uninhabitable, and not unfrequently was nailed up.⁵⁶³

In the early modern period, death was an experience much closer to and an event much more frequently encountered in people's lives than it is today. However, unnatural death, mentioned above in the suicides resulting from tawdry love affairs gone awry, was a powerful pollutant. Death before the right time, with affairs still unsettled and rights of succession still in dispute, or the deaths of sinners or people suspected of sin, were other factors attributed to the cause behind a specific haunting. The haunting of a house in Cherrey-Tree Alley in Middlesex in 1685 was attributed to a death caused by plague as the building 'was in the late dreadful Sickness in London, commonly made use of as a Pest-House, for the more Gentile sort of Persons'.⁵⁶⁴ In Jena in 1724, the source of the supernatural activity in a room in a house in the Löbergasse where the author claimed to have stayed, was due to a suicide in the room several years earlier.⁵⁶⁵ The highwayman Thomas Wilmot, hanged in 1670, pretended to be a ghost in a gentleman's house in order to rob it. He exploited the belief that the house was haunted by a barber who in the time of his host's grandfather, had 'cut his Throat in it, for the Love of a coy Chambermaid' and that his spirit appeared 'at usual Times with a Razor in one Hand, and a Basin and Light in the other, crying in a hoarse Tone, Will you be shav'd?'⁵⁶⁶

Indeed, the houses of notorious sinners were particularly troubled after their deaths in certain high-profile cases. The legend of Faust recorded that after his death, his house was empty as 'scarce any body could abide therein' with passers-by reporting seeing his face peering out of

⁵⁶³ Grose, *Provincial Glossary*, 2-3.

⁵⁶⁴ Anon, *A Full and True Account of a Strange Apparition that [for] two Months past hath frequently appeared and haunted the House of Mr. S----ge in Cherrey-Tree-Alley near [--]nhill-Fields by the Artillery-wall in the County of Middlesex*. (London, 1685), 2.

⁵⁶⁵ Sieckel, *Nachrichten*, 15.

⁵⁶⁶ Charles Johnson, *A General History of the Lives and Adventures of the Most Famous Highwaymen, Murderers, Street-Robbers, &c* (London, 1734), 110-1.

the windows.⁵⁶⁷ An executed murderer in Dalkeith called Spalding was reported to have caused great consternation as in his grave 'he made such a rumbling and tumbling therein that the very earth was railed and they could hardly keep the mould down' and that 'not long after the house where he formerly lived at the east end of town was haunted with a ghost, which made it stand empty a long time'.⁵⁶⁸ A recurrent tale in German texts related to the residence of a rich citizen of Halberstadt who had been notorious for his hedonism and feasting while alive. After his death, 'daily, towards evening so many spectres and ghosts came and appeared that finally the house was left desolate and empty' as 'each evening in the room where the rich man had dined in life, they would come as before in the shapes of the host and his guests'.⁵⁶⁹

The question of what these spirits were was of great interest to theologians and divines. We have already looked at how many Catholics understood hauntings within a double Purgatory or hell on earth. Protestant theory for much of the period would instead understand them as the devil celebrating his victory in the place of the sinner in life. Johann von Münster, the reformed writer and jurist, acknowledged that the damned would 'greatly desire to return from their hellish pain to this place of their former joy, lust, sin and disgrace: but they cannot'.⁵⁷⁰ They were chained in hell and unlike spirits in Catholic hells, were not given temporary passes to leave.

Treasure and Misers

The treasure ghost is one of the most enduring tropes of the genre. In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Horatio challenges theatre's most famous ghost to reveal the specific reason for its distress, asking the apparition 'if thou hast uphoarded in thy life/ extorted treasure in the womb of the

⁵⁶⁷ Anon, *The History of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Dr. John Faustus newly printed and in Convenient Places Impertinent Matter amended according to the True Copy printed at Frankford/ and translated into English by P.R.* (London, 1674), LXIII.

⁵⁶⁸ Burton, *Kingdom*, 85-6.

⁵⁶⁹ Grosse, *Magica*, 52. 'täglich gegen Abend soviel Spectra oder Gespenste kommen und erschienen/ daß das Haus endlich gar wüst und leer ist stehen bleiben' ... 'Da ist es alle abend in das gemach/ da der reiche Man bey sein Leben bancketiret hatte/ kommen/ in aller Gestalt/ wie der verstorbene Wirt mit seinen gesten zuvor gewesen'; Moscherosch, *Visionum*, 252-3; Bromhall, *History*, 44-5.

⁵⁷⁰ Münster, *Christlicher Vnderricht* (1601), 51. 'gern wolten auf der hellischen Pein/ an diesen Ort jhrer vorigen frewd/ wollust/ sünd und schand widerumb kommen: Aber sie können nicht'.

earth/ For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death'.⁵⁷¹ David Lederer claimed that it was the most dominant activity associated with ghosts in Southern Germany from the eighteenth century onwards and it was a recurrent figure in nineteenth-century collections of supernatural folklore.⁵⁷² Indeed, the Swiss-born alchemist and astrologer Paracelsus (1493-1541) claimed that treasure was the sole reason for hauntings in the sixteenth century.⁵⁷³ Johann Jacob Bräuner noted that:

If a treasure lies hidden in a house, then many spirits are seen, and a great rattling is heard at night. If only such signs occur, are seen and heard, it is generally the case that a treasure was buried and hidden there, should one apportion no other cause than this one alone.⁵⁷⁴

Johannes Dillinger has already comprehensively examined beliefs surrounding treasure hunting and the spirits encountered.⁵⁷⁵ In this section, I will focus on those treasure ghosts perceived as either the dead or devils mimicking the dead. I hope to show how the human spirit linked to memory and place was a critical element in discerning and locating treasure. The degree to which aspects of these tropes were incorporated within the Protestant demonic paradigm usually associated with the Purgatorial ghost is also vital to stress. In ghost narratives, memory, place and morality were closely entwined. So too was treasure.

In 1661, the foul spectre of a Mr Powel, a baker, that haunted his former house in London was attributed to the conjecture that 'there hath been much money hid, either in the Garden or about the House, which as yet cannot be discovered'.⁵⁷⁶ Treasure hunting demanded signs pointing to the presence of valuable goods at a site, one of which was a ghost. Georg Paul Hönn, the author of a famous dictionary of scams, described how con artists would dress up as ghosts and devils in certain locations to encourage the false belief that treasure was hidden

⁵⁷¹ *Hamlet*, I. 1. 148-50.

⁵⁷² Lederer, 'Living', 52-3.

⁵⁷³ Dillinger, *Magical Treasure*, 77.

⁵⁷⁴ Bräuner, *Physicalisch- und Historisch-Erörterte Curiositæten*, 241. 'Wann ein verborgener Schatz in einem Hause lieget, lassen sich daselbsten an schweren Nächten viele Gespenster sehen, und groß Gerumpel hören. Wann sich nun solche Zeichen zutragen, sehen und hören lassen, ist gemeiniglich die Ursache, daß da ein Schatz eingegraben und verborgen lieget, und soll man solches keiner andern Ursache zumessen, dann dieser allein'.

⁵⁷⁵ Dillinger, *Magical Treasure*.

⁵⁷⁶ Anon, *Strange and True News from Long-Ally in More-Fields, Southwark, and Wakefield in Yorkshire 1. The Wonderful and Miraculous Appearance of the Ghost of Griffin Davis (at the House of Mr. Watkins in Long-Ally) to his Daughter Susan Davis ... 2. A more Exact Relation of the Struge Appearance of the Ghost of Mr. Powel near the Faulcon ... 3. The Heavy Judgment of God shewed on Jane Morris a Widdow near Wakefield in Yorkshiere... / The truth hereof is averred by Sir. Rich. Keys, Mr. Hare, and several other Persons of Quality* (London, 1661), 7.

there and that the services of a specialist would be required.⁵⁷⁷ Many of these indicated the activity of a human soul tied to a location. This was then interpreted by relying upon local memory of the interaction of people at that site and their moral character if known. The next stage, for those intent on recovering hidden goods, then often required supernatural confirmation of the presence of treasure in that specific place through mediums and spirit guides before real digging could commence.

What was clear was the close connection between treasure, place and memory of person at a site. Ghosts were indeed logical and perfect treasure guardians.⁵⁷⁸ They were often the apparitions of sinners who had tied themselves to the concerns of this world rather than the next. They had died with unfinished business on their hands and had failed to pass on their goods to their heirs. They had also often died violently and been consigned to a makeshift grave without any rites or honour.

Johann Fridrich Stockhausen (1665-1693), the Goslar-born pastor, wrote on those whose deeds and memory sparked these tales. He observed this intimate link between person, place, property and afterlife fate and passed comment on it. It was popularly believed that an apparition at such a place

was the spirit of the person who had buried the treasure, who must guard it until the Last Day or until the treasure is found. Such people have been judged by the Word of God: Where your treasure is, there is also your heart.⁵⁷⁹

Misers figure prominently as ghosts which haunted treasure locations. Just as in the parable of the talents, misers hid their gold in the earth rather than put it to good use.⁵⁸⁰ In a world of limited good, the suspicion that this gold was amassed at the direct expense of others was typified in the occupations of those who often returned as ghosts. Millers were one such group accused of being avaricious and misers to boot, and consequently often appeared as protagonists in ghost stories. They were the most immediate point of interaction between people and the early capitalist economy and their position of vantage was one that could easily be abused at the expense of the wider community. Misers refused to conform to

⁵⁷⁷ Hönn, *Betrugs-Lexikon*, 337.

⁵⁷⁸ Dillinger, *Magical Treasure*, 84.

⁵⁷⁹ Stockhausen, *Mira*, 163-4. 'es sey der Geist den Menschen/ welches den Schatz had eingraben/ der müsse jetzo bis am Jüngsten Tag oder so lang biß der Schatz gefunden werd/ denselbigen verhüten. Solches haben sie geurtheilet aus den Worten Christi/ da er saget: Wo euer Schatz ist/ da ist auch euer hertz'.

⁵⁸⁰ Matthew 25. 14-30.

traditional modes of charity and reciprocity. There was also the logical conjecture that if a miser had not spent their money, they must have hidden it instead. Christian Lehmann recorded one such tale. In 1674 in the mountain village of Brand under Joachimsthal in the Erz, there lived a nasty, miserly and uncharitable female miller. The bread which was baked from her flour was of such poor quality that the villagers complained, to which she retorted that the pigs could eat it instead. After her death, a ghostly sow plagued her husband, eating at the same trough as the other swine. Her daughter was as mean as her mother and when she died suddenly in 1691, her ghost was also seen as she had told no one where she had buried her money. In October 1693, her widower could no longer bear to live there and planned to move away taking his money but was found dead in a nearby field.⁵⁸¹ Other tales linking treasures and millers include the story set in Leipzig in 1707 of a man who, armed with a magical text, went hunting for treasure in a miller's cellar which was believed to have been hidden there during the Swedish War.⁵⁸²

Another potential miser ghost was the story which Jean Bodin claimed to have heard in December 1558 relating to a doctor, Ogler Ferrier, who had investigated a haunted house in 'Tholose', either modern day Toulouse or Tolosa in Spain. In a tale with many close parallels to the Athenodorus legend, the apparition of a woman 'quite richly bedecked with golden chains, jewellery and gems', was seen standing beside a pillar in the cellar with a candle in her hand.⁵⁸³ Possibly, the chains were mere jewellery, though it is tempting to infer that she had knitted a different type of chain, Jacob Marley fashion and that her treasure now lay underneath the place where her ghost was seen. An English example, appropriately entitled 'The Miser's Ghost', mentioned how a strange apparition was seen at a 'Sir Thomos C—y's house in Kensington, who lately died without a Will, and left Two Hundred Thousand Pounds to be scrambled for'.⁵⁸⁴

Adam Bernd (1676-1748), the pastor most famous for his autobiography set in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, related his own experiences lodging in quarters

⁵⁸¹ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 944.

⁵⁸² Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 250-3.

⁵⁸³ Thomas Johann Schultze, *Des Teuffels Berg-Werck, oder Höchsthöthiger, und in Gottes Wort gegründeter Unterricht, Was von den Schatz-graben, und Geld-Suchen zu halten sey* (Wittenberg, 1680), 137-8. 'gantz reichlich mit gülden ketten/ Geschmeiden und kleinodien geschmückt'.

⁵⁸⁴ Nathaniel West, *The Devil to pay at Kensington, or, The Misers Ghost hovering over his Pelf being a full and true Account of a Strange Apparition, that appeared at Sir Thomos C--y's House in Kensington, who lately dyed without a Will, and left two hundred thousand Pounds to be scrambled for* (London, 1700).

as a schoolboy in Breslau in 1690, as his home was too far from the centre. He was told that in the courtyard on the left side behind the entrance 'a treasure must lie buried there; for one would sometimes hear in the night the counting of money and at times there would be sparks of fire'. He claimed that he saw the light burning one night and heard the counting of the same money associated with the spirit.⁵⁸⁵ Place, memory, treasure and the supernatural were closely intertwined in this memorate. The actual identity of the spirit was unclear to both the modern reader and Bernd himself. The counting of money could be the sound an elemental made. It could also be a play upon the memory of a person who had focused too much on the accumulation of money in life.

One provenance of treasure consisted of goods buried in a place in lieu of being deposited in a bank. Death overtook the depositor before he or she could reveal its location to loved ones and on occasion, avarice would contribute to this process. The legacy of the heirs was lost and only a ghost could reveal its whereabouts. It had antique precedents. The apparition of the daughter of Spiridione, bishop of Cyprus, appeared to him to inform him where she had hidden the treasure she left behind.⁵⁸⁶ In 1705 in England we find the story of the ghost of Madam Maybel which appeared to a Mrs Harvy and her sister to inform them of the exact whereabouts of 4000 pounds. As the chest and money unearthed dated from the reign of Henry VIII, it was conjectured that 'the said Treasure was convey'd to that obscure place by some of Madam Maybell's Relations, and coceal'd from her Family ever since that time'.⁵⁸⁷ Christian Lehmann recorded the story of the ghost of a woman who plagued her husband in Joachimsthal. Eventually, the pastor was called, and he conjured it before him. Appearing in its shroud, it revealed two reasons for its unrest. The first was a chain it had buried. The second was that her husband wanted to remarry, a decision she was displeased with.⁵⁸⁸

War again could complicate the situation. One such case was the twenty-eight shillings buried under a hearth in Ulster in the 1640s by the woman whose ghost would later appear to David

⁵⁸⁵ Adam Bernd, *M. Adam Bernds, Evangel. Pred. Eigene Lebens-Beschreibung: Samt einer Aufrichtigen Entdeckung, und deutlichen Beschreibung einer der grösten, obwol großen Theils noch unbekannten Leibes- und Gemüths-Plage, Welche Gott zuweilen über die Welt-Kinder, und auch wohl über seine eigene Kinder verhänget; Den Unwissenden zum Unterricht, Den Gelehrten zu weiterm Nachdencken, Den Sündern zum Schrecken, und Den Betrübten, und Angefochtenen zum Troste.* (Leipzig, 1738), 65-7. 'es müßte ein Schatz da begraben liegen; denn man höre es in der Nacht manchmal Geld zählen, und sprühe auch zuweilen mit Feuer'.

⁵⁸⁶ Waldschmidt, *Pythonissa Endorea*, 423.

⁵⁸⁷ *The Female Ghost: Being a Strange and Wonderful Discovery of an Iron Chestful of Money* (London, 1705), in Davies (ed.), *Ghosts: A Social History*, Vol I, 83-4.

⁵⁸⁸ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 946.

Hunter at Portmore in 1663, with the wish that he would find and convey the money to her second husband.⁵⁸⁹ Such treasure need not necessarily be concealed in the ground or in a building's walls. It could also apply to wills and legal documents which were hidden and lost, as in the example of the spirit that bade one search in a chest to recover a deed for his family.⁵⁹⁰

Dillinger stated that 'It was in the ghost's interest that the treasure was discovered for it was a necessary condition for his redemption. A successful treasure hunt spelled the ghost's deliverance'.⁵⁹¹ The need for a person to leave this life without any unfinished business was a recurrent motif in revenancy after death. Property and status should be transferred in an orderly manner with the heirs assuming the role and rights of the deceased. Keith Thomas favoured Blauner's conclusions that much ghost belief reflected anxieties over premature death and the friction which resulted during the transfer of authority and goods before its time.⁵⁹² People died without making their peace with God or their neighbours. People died without telling their heirs where their goods had been hidden or banked at home. A miser or one tied too closely to the material world would hesitate to tell where their treasure was hidden until it was too late, and death overtook them. This mirrored the deeper failure of the person to repent while they still could.

People killed violently for the treasure they possessed also figured prominently in ghost narratives of this trope. Johannes Praetorius related the story of a ghost that appeared to Magdalena, a cook in a castle in Mutzschen in 1660. It bade her raise a treasure from 3 cubits down as 'the treasure was put down there with innocent spilt blood. Therefore, it must be lifted again'.⁵⁹³ The victims were often transients whose deaths could easily be hidden and who made themselves tempting targets by carrying substantial wealth on them. These included merchants and pedlars as well as soldiers. As most of these were victims of secret crimes, their corpses were denied the necessary rites and place to enable them to pass to the afterlife. Indeed, if the spirit was human, it was in its interest to interact with the living to

⁵⁸⁹ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 387-9.

⁵⁹⁰ Taillepié, *Treatise*, 68; Anon, *Life after Death: Or the History of Apparitions, Ghosts, Spirits or Spectres. Consisting of variety of true Stories, attested by People of undoubted Veracity* (London, 1758), 19-31.

⁵⁹¹ Dillinger, *Magical Treasure*, 74.

⁵⁹² Thomas, *Religion*, 723.

⁵⁹³ Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 63-4. 'Der Schatz wäre mit unschuldig vergossenenem Blut dahin gelegt worden. So müßte er auch wieder gehoben werden'.

secure an honourable burial. The treasure for which it could give directions to, or that buried alongside it in case of more accidental death, would pay for the necessary re-interment, provide for any surviving heirs as well as give on occasion a handsome finder's cut.

Locating hidden treasure could, therefore, be interpreted by some as an act of charity. Acting from a Catholic paradigm, the treasure which had ultimately tied them to this earth, either by being hidden or by being the cause of their death, was put back into circulation again and was indeed detoxified by charity. Some of this treasure would pay for masses and services which would hasten the soul through Purgatory. Treasure ghosts like these could, therefore, be quite easily incorporated within the Catholic canon of tales as they promoted and reinforced beliefs in the cycle and economy of Purgatory. For Protestant writers, on the other hand, this link between treasure and the Purgatorial spirit was much more demonic.

Conclusion

What one can see from looking at popular methods of discernment, was that memory and place were crucial to the understanding of why a spirit walked. An evil deed or memory of an evil person permitted an evil spirit access to that place. Whether it was a Devil in disguise or a soul in distress, these were veneers on what essentially was an anxiety regarding that place and the memory of immorality, real or imagined, which that site embodied. Tales of treasure linked spirit, place and memory even more closely together. The haunted house was indeed a site of temptation, a stage where one had to imitate Job and drive out the demon through determined resistance, patience and prayer. Timothy Chesters, Miriam Rieger and P.G. Maxwell-Stuart claimed this as central to the early modern haunted house.⁵⁹⁴ For them, it was a supernatural trope that replaced the earlier preferred site of medieval haunting, namely the monastery. However, one should not let the 'spectaculars' of early modern house infestations overshadow the more mundane haunted houses and ruins that littered the physical and mental landscapes of the time.

⁵⁹⁴ Chesters, *Ghost Stories*, 80-3, 91; Rieger, *Teufel*, 17-18; P.G. Maxwell-Stuart, *Poltergeists: A History of Violent Ghostly Phenomena* (Stroud: Amberley, 2011), 122.

Castles

The iconic haunted castle of contemporary literature is a Gothic pile, falling into ruins with a history suggestive of oppression and foul deeds. However, it is important to remember that castles served multiple functions to different audiences. They were primarily homes for the powerful. They were statements of power, possession, status and family legacy, inheritance and rights. They were also places of employment for people nearby as well as serving on occasion as armouries and prisons. The people who worked and lived in the castle, the servants, groundsmen and any garrison attached to the building maintained their own occupational subcultures while sharing close everyday contact with their betters.

Castles and great houses were more likely to be haunted because they were older and more well-known than the houses of the poor and had seen more history within their walls. In *Der Vielförmige Hintzelmann* (1704), a text that centred on the haunting of a castle by the spirit Hintzelmann or Hütgin, mention was made that 'seldom did castles and houses remain free from unfortunate incidents throughout the considerable time they stood', so, 'it was no wonder that such ghostly knockings and monkey business were perceived to occur there more than elsewhere' as 'was the case with various princely residences long conversant with such tales'.⁵⁹⁵ In the sources, we find a memory of evil associated with certain castles and places. There was a sound theological basis for this. The emphasis on Isaiah 13 and 34 clearly linked sin with where it was committed, the fall and ruin of a place both cause and consequence of transgressions carried out there. The devil masquerading in the guise of the evildoer was central to Protestant apparition theory. In addition, Catholic understandings of hells of place and earthly Purgatories clearly demanded that the debt that sin incurred be atoned for in the place where it had been committed.

Castles were the home of a ruling class who had the potential to affect the lives of those around greatly, either for their betterment or their detriment. Relations were reciprocal in nature, to a degree. The elites would collect taxes and rents from those over whom they had

⁵⁹⁵ Anon, *Vielförmige Hintzelmann*, 28. 'Wie nun alte und etliche secula hindurch gestandene Schlösser und häuser die geraume Zeit herdurch selten von unglücklichen Fallen gantz befreyet bleiben/ So ist auch nicht zu verwundern/ daß man daselbst das Gespenstliche Gepolter und Affenspiel mehr als anderswo wahrnimmt/ wie unterschiedliche Furstliche Residentzen von dergleichen Erscheinungen von langer Zeit her bekandt gewesen/ solches haben viele glaubhaffte Erzehlungen biß dahero dargethan'.

power and expect deference from them. In return, they would provide protection in times of difficulty. Clearly, the imbalance in reciprocities within such relationships and the potential for abuse by those who held power was one that could breed huge resentment. An early eighteenth-century English text, though satirical in vein, captured this mood. The author noted that wicked men 'do, by a kind of natural tendency after Death, often Haunt, or hover, about their Graves, Places of Abode, or Stages on which their Impious Crimes were acted'. Though drawing attention to 'the mighty Increase/ there is of late, of these sorts of sinners', he went on to state that previously, there had only been 'one Arch-designing Knave, Extortioner, and Oppressor of the Poor... accounted an intolerable Pest to the whole Country where he lived; but now every Village and Corner...hath one of these Vermin planted in it'.⁵⁹⁶

Lacking the means to confront these abuses or inequalities directly, rumour and tales encapsulated and expressed these grievances instead. Ghost stories were one such tool that could be employed. They tied people, place and moralities closely together and cast potential suspicion on the moral character of the deceased whose ghost was seen and/or doubt on aspects of the heirs' succession. Indeed, rumour is not the preserve of the poor, but it is one of the few strategies they can participate in relatively safely due to the anonymity provided.

Both Malcolm Gaskill and Laura Gowing have observed how sightings of spirits were used by the lower classes 'to influence and engage the authorities' and 'to expose secrets and misdeeds' against those suspected of murder and other serious crimes.⁵⁹⁷ Ghosts could say things people might be afraid to say.⁵⁹⁸ James C. Scott believed that peasant societies had their own 'hidden transcript...to characterise discourse that takes place "offstage", beyond direct observation by powerholders'.⁵⁹⁹ In public, they would acquiesce to the dominant

⁵⁹⁶ Anon, *An Exact Narrative of many Surprizing Matters of fact uncontestably wrought by an Evil Spirit or Spirits, in the House of Master Jan Smagge, Farmer, in Canvy-Island, near Leigh in Essex, upon the 10th, 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th of September last, in the Day-Time; In the Presence of The Reverend Mr. Lord, Curate to the said Island, Jan Smagge, Master of the House, and of several Neighbours, Servants and Strangers, who came at different times, as Mr. Lord's particular Care to discharge his Duty, and their Curiosity led them to this Place of Wonders. Together with A Short Account of some of the Extraordinary Things credibly said to have formerly disturb'd the House, both before and since Mr. Smagge came into it: The utmost Caution being used not to exceed the Truth in the minutest Circumstance. In a letter from Malden in Essex, to a gentleman in London* (London, 1709), 25-6.

⁵⁹⁷ Handley, *Visions*, 63.

⁵⁹⁸ T. Butler, 'The Haunting of Isabell Binington: Ghosts of Murder, Texts, and Law in Restoration England', *Journal of British Studies*, 50:2 (2011), 264.

⁵⁹⁹ J.C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 4, 25.

narrative of the elites and behave as expected. Away from the immediate gaze of their masters and mistresses, they had more freedom to vent their true feelings.

Studies have looked at the social and political tactics ghosts served in the early modern period. They could function as an unscrupulous means to achieve a private end.⁶⁰⁰ They could slander both the living and the dead, the strong and the weak.⁶⁰¹ Several studies have looked at how spirits were conscripted into the fight against crime and help forge a more distinctly Protestant ghost, one that demonstrated both the power and reach of Providence, acting in tandem with the executioners of state authority. Malcolm Gaskill noted how apparition stories permitted accusations and denunciations of suspects when the available evidence was inadequate but suspicion strong.⁶⁰² Belinda Lewis, following the example of Natalie Davis, suggested that accusations made through ghosts 'allowed people to be more pro-active in advancing suspicions and prompting an investigation while also shielding oneself from a neighbour's wrath', especially as one might need to live alongside the accused if they weren't convicted.⁶⁰³ James C. Scott observed both the power and anonymity rumour offered as a social tactic for the weak.⁶⁰⁴ It is possible to capture this hidden transcript in societies where we have an oral record, but for early modern societies, though easy to conjecture, it is much harder to reconstruct. It is one thing for popular and elite, oral and print, to collaborate closely in a few cases involving ghosts and murder. The outcome corroborates the elite narrative of a panoptic society overseen by God, whose instruments of earthly justice are the agents of the state working in close cooperation with a willing underclass.

However, this is different to one where the elites and the memory of their ancestors are vilified. To say that the apparition of one returned after death suggested a moral failing on the part of the deceased in life, or on the part of his or her heirs to respect their memory and fulfil their legacy. It is one which would be hard to trace in the historical record, in a medium controlled by the elite, in a society obsessed by order. One should exercise some caution, with the stories that have come down to us in the record, as they can be highly stylised within the

⁶⁰⁰ Thomas, *Religion*, 711-2.

⁶⁰¹ Marshall, 'Transformations', 22, 27; Gordon, 'Malevolent Ghosts', 88-9; Brown, *Fate*, 89.

⁶⁰² M. Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 233.

⁶⁰³ Lewis, 'Protestantism', 87.

⁶⁰⁴ Scott, *Domination*, 19, 144-5.

contemporary elite literary convention. Though the message they convey is clear, the extent to which they reflect folk traditions may be more questionable.

White Ladies, Ancestral and Popular Portents

Erasmus Francisci noted that castles were often haunted by their own specific ghost or spirit:

One has it not only from common rumour but also from some credible mouths and many eye-witnesses, the sure knowledge that in certain, prominent noble family houses or castles that spirits in specific shapes are seen. In some like a dog, in others like a horse; elsewhere like a woman, namely a maiden or widow; in other places like a monk; Still in others like a knight or likewise.⁶⁰⁵

Francisci continued that 'Such spirits appear in most cases whenever a death is at hand' though he did acknowledge that they could appear at other times, though not as often, in cases unrelated to approaching mortalities.⁶⁰⁶ The most famous portent ghosts associated with castles were those linked to the elites. It was a trope found elsewhere in Europe, one that crossed national and religious boundaries. The French Jesuit, Nicolas Caussin (1583-1651), writing in a work published in English in 1650 posed the question, 'Why have so many noble families certain signs, which never fail to happen when some one of the family is to die?'⁶⁰⁷ Taillepié mentioned how the fairy Melusine was the ancestress of the noble house of Lusignan, 'and when she is seen near a mansion where any of her race may dwell, lamenting bitterly, wailing and beating her breast, this is a sure omen that some son or daughter of her people is marked for the grave'.⁶⁰⁸ The Cistercian prior and compiler of hagiography Caesarius

⁶⁰⁵ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 476. 'Man hat nicht allein aus dem allgemeinem Gerücht /sondern auch / aus manchem glaubhaftem Munde /und vielen Aug-zeugen / die sichere Gewißheit / daß in gewisser / bevorab hochfürnehmer / Familien Häusern- oder Schlössern / die Gespenster / in besondrer Gestalt erblickt werden: In etlichen / wie ein Hund; in andren wie ein Pferd; anderswo / wie eine Weibs-Person / nemlich wie eine Jungfrau / oder Witwe; andrer Orten / wie ein Münch; noch andrer / wie ein Cavallier / oder dergleichen'.

⁶⁰⁶ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 476. 'Solche Gespenster erscheinen zwar gemeinlich / und am allermeisten / wann ein Todesfall obhanden' though he did acknowledge that 'doch gleichwol auch nicht selten /zu andrer Zeit / eben so wol / und ohne Sterbens-Bedeutung'.

⁶⁰⁷ Nicolas Caussin, *The Holy Court in Five Tomes, the First treating of Motives which should excite Men of Qualitie to Christian Perfection, the Second of the Prelate, Souldier, States-man, and Ladie, the Third of Maxims of Christianitie against Prophanesse ..., the Fourth containing the Command of Reason over the Passions, the Fifth now first published in English and much augmented according to the last Edition of the Authour containing the Lives of the most famous and illustrious Courtiers taken out of the Old and New Testament and other modern Authours / written in French by Nicholas Caussin ; Translated into English by Sr. T.H. and others* (London, 1650), 429.

⁶⁰⁸ Taillepié, *Treatise*, 85.

of Heisterbach (c.1180-c.1240), mentioned how ‘a woman’s shape in a white dress with a pallid face’ looked over the fence of the properties of two knights in Stamheim near Cologne before returning to the graveyard. Within a short time, both households suffered death and loss.⁶⁰⁹

The most famous German example was the White Lady of the House of Brandenburg which most usually appeared whenever one of that line would die. The legend was so well known that even John Aubrey in England and Increase Mather in colonial America mentioned her.⁶¹⁰ Erasmus Francisci devoted four chapters of his *Höllische Proteus* to beliefs surrounding her origins and nature, her functions, and attendant legends and encounters with her over the years.⁶¹¹ The legend itself supposedly originated far from Berlin in either Plassenburg in Franconia or the Rosenberg family in Neuhaus in Bohemia.⁶¹² Another was a possible connection to the Tortelli family in Parma.⁶¹³ What is certain is that the core and structure of the legend stretched back into the late medieval period, well before the Reformation. It is not my intention here to dissect her origins or discern her actual identity. The multiple possibilities for who or what she was stood uncomfortably alongside the role she performed as a warning of imminent death. So long as respect was shown to her, she was not an aggressive or overtly evil spirit. Her foreknowledge of death embodied the contradictions these spirits held in that according to strict theology, no one knew the time or hour, nor was it in the interests of the Lord to reveal it. The Devil with his vast reserves of experience and knowledge of humankind could extrapolate that an individual’s death was near. However, in the case of the White Lady and certain other portent spirits of death, she did not appear to revel in their approaching demise as the Devil might with an evil-doer.

It is much more pertinent to examine her function. The links between portent spirit, place and family were important. We can see that such a spirit stressed a seamless continuity of

⁶⁰⁹ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *The Dialogue on Miracles / Caesarius of Heisterbach (1220-1235); Translated by H. von E. Scott and C.C. Swinton Bland; With an introduction by G.G. Coulton*, 2 vols (London: Routledge, 1929), II, 287.

⁶¹⁰ Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 166-7; Increase Mather, *Cases of Conscience concerning Evil Spirits personating Men, Witchcrafts, Infallible Proofs of Guilt in such as are accused with that Crime. All considered according to the Scriptures, History, Experience, and the Judgment of many Learned Men / by Increase Mather, President of Harvard College at Cambridge, and Teacher of a Church at Boston in New-England* (Boston, 1693), 23.

⁶¹¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 58-95.

⁶¹² Stockhausen, *Mira*, 60-1; Freud, *Gewissens=Fragen*, 190; Praetorius, *Anthropodemvs*, 327.

⁶¹³ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 78; Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 1040-1; Anon, *Vielförmige Hintzelmann*, 34; Grosse, *Magica*, 3; Taillepiéd, *Treatise*, 85; Stockhausen, *Mira*, 60.

succession with the past which emphasised both antiquity and legitimacy. This asserted the ancient rights and elite status of the family in its ancestral seats. It affirmed power. It did not appear for bastards. Keith Thomas highlighted Blauner's thesis regarding premature death and the transfer of authority and inheritance as a key factor in ghost belief.⁶¹⁴ For Thomas, 'it was commoner for men to be carried off at the prime of their life, leaving behind them a certain amount of social disturbance, which ghost-beliefs helped to dispel'. He maintained that nowadays, it is 'more common for people to live out their full life-span, and to die only after they have retired and withdrawn from an active role in society'.⁶¹⁵ This explained the modern decline in belief in ghosts in Thomas' eyes. In the case of the White Lady, it may have its justification. Following this model, one could ask if nobles ever really retired. Status and rank were passed on by death. Furthermore, the job of ruling was a sacred task entrusted by God to one and to one's line. As the natural leaders in war, nobles were also more exposed to the risk of sudden death from violence than many others.

The White Lady evidently moved with the correct lineage and her legend became a symbol of status testifying to the legitimacy and claims of the Hohenzollerns just as it had done for the Rosenbergs and Tortelli families. It has been noted that in Ireland, the banshee followed the 'true Irish nobility and commoner' rather than incomers.⁶¹⁶ It was one way of cementing identity. In the case of the House of Brandenburg, it was an elite one. Other noble houses had their ghosts. The House of Wettin in Saxony had its own spectral portent. Peter Goldschmidt mentioned how 'it is known that a monk is always seen in Dresden whenever one from the Elector's house will die'.⁶¹⁷ The most famous encounter with it was set in the time of Johann Georg I of Saxony (1585-1656) when a light was reported in a room that should have been empty. The elector and his steward went to investigate and encountered a monk, sitting writing at a desk. Remonstrating with the monk that the room was reserved for the elector himself, the ghostly monk retorted that he sat there, recording the godless life and sins of the prince which he would bring before God. He then vanished.⁶¹⁸ Meanwhile, in Weimar, a

⁶¹⁴ Thomas, *Religion*, 723.

⁶¹⁵ Thomas, *Religion*, 723.

⁶¹⁶ A. Ridge, *Death Customs in Rural Ireland: Traditional Funerary Rites in the Irish Midlands* (Galway: Arlen House, 2009), 14; P. Lysaght, *The Banshee: The Irish Supernatural Death Messenger* (Dublin: Glendale Press, 1986), 60.

⁶¹⁷ Goldschmidt, *Höllische Morpheus*, 164. 'es ist bekandt/ daß sich zu Dreßden allezeit ein Mönch sehen läßt/ wenn einer vom Churfürstlichem Hause sterben soll'.

⁶¹⁸ Goldschmidt, *Höllische Morpheus*, 164-5.

burning light would be seen in a castle before the death of its lord.⁶¹⁹ Likewise, the old woman of the Tortelli family of Parma would always be seen in the hall of a certain castle, 'about the chimney', when 'any of the Family dyeth, or is likely to dye'.⁶²⁰ Christian Lehmann recorded how a great house at Venusberg Bei Thum was haunted by a white lady that would be seen before a death in the family. Nobody knew her identity for sure, but she would follow the same route down the stairs, across the courtyard and out the gate which funerals would. If the death involved the wider rather than immediate family, she would be seen looking from the windows.⁶²¹

Portents of death linked to the place of residence were not restricted to the elites who could afford castles and stately homes. Rather, there was a rich tradition of portents linked to place or item throughout the period, across class and apparent in occupational subcultures too. The Scandinavian bishop Olaus Magnus (1490-1557) mentioned how both the commandants and garrison of a certain castle in Finland were warned of oncoming death by the ghostly apparition of a musician in the middle of a stream, a possible example of an occupational-military portent.⁶²² Miners were an example of one group who paid special attention to knockings underground.⁶²³ In prisons too, the death of inmates would be signalled by great rumblings at night or the movement of the swords of the executioners.⁶²⁴ There were tales of portents that in monasteries and council chambers that would warn of the impending death of one of their community. Candles would extinguish themselves on the altar signalling a death.⁶²⁵ In Breslau cathedral, when a canon would die, a rose would be found on his seat.⁶²⁶ In Merseburg, a loud knocking would be heard from the seat of the canon who would die.⁶²⁷ In other churches and chapters, there were tales of the apparitions of headless monks and

⁶¹⁹ Stockhausen, *Mira*, 103.

⁶²⁰ Bromhall, *History*, 3.

⁶²¹ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 942-3.

⁶²² Olaus Magnus, *Historia De Gentibus Septentrionalibus, Romæ 1555: Description of the Northern Peoples, Rome 1555*, trans. by P. Fisher and H. Higgens, 3 vols (London: Hakluyt Society, 1996-98), III, 1051-2; Stockhausen, *Mira*, 62; Bromhall, *History*, 25.

⁶²³ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 1014-5; Stockhausen, *Mira*, 62-63.

⁶²⁴ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 79; Stockhausen, *Mira*, 78.

⁶²⁵ Schmidt, *Gestriegelte Rocken Philosophia*, 288.

⁶²⁶ Paul Ludolph Berckenmeyer, *Vermehrter Curieuser Antiquarius, Das ist: Allerhand auserlesene Geographische und Historische Merckwürdigkeiten/ So in denen Europæischen Ländern zu finden / Aus Berühmter Männer Reisen zusammen getragen/ und mit einem zweyfachen Register versehen/ von P. L. Berckenmeyern* (Hamburg, 1711), 478.

⁶²⁷ Berckenmeyer, *Vermehrter Curieuser Antiquarius*, 454.

nuns seen in their usual chairs.⁶²⁸ One priest would hear a sound like a sack of corn hitting the floor from his bed whenever a member of his congregation would die in the plague.⁶²⁹ Meanwhile, in council chambers, noises would be heard from the seats of those about to die or their cushions would be thrown around.⁶³⁰

There were also rich traditions of death portents going from door to door and window to window, particularly in plague time. It evoked the memory of the Angel of Death striking down the first-born of Egypt.⁶³¹ It could also be traced back to stories of plagues in Constantinople when an evil spirit would stalk the streets of the city, each knock it gave on a door signalling the number who would die inside.⁶³² In 1551, in activity resembling this, the townsfolk of many places in Brandenburg were frightened by the Devil walking the streets, sometimes dressed in white and knocking on the doors.⁶³³ Some portents were linked to monasteries as in this tale set in Lübeck in 1531. During a pestilence, a voice was heard under the kitchen window of the monastery urging the cook to prepare food for thirty-six of the community and two strangers who were to set off on a journey. The brother then saw this same number of spectres in the refectory. Thirty-eight died soon afterwards in the plague that swept the building.⁶³⁴ Francisci related how when he was aged ten, his cook saw a coffin being carried past the kitchen window early in the morning, a sign she took for an impending pestilence.⁶³⁵ In the Austrian Tirol in Schwaz and Innsbruck, there was a spirit called the *Schmeisser* that brought death to the house of whoever's window it looked in.⁶³⁶ There were also wailing spirits heard outside the home. The *Taisk* was 'a loud Cry without Doors, exactly resembling the Voice of some particular Person, whose Death is foretold by it'.⁶³⁷ It was a belief found in

⁶²⁸ Stockhausen, *Mira*, 59.

⁶²⁹ Stockhausen, *Mira*, 76.

⁶³⁰ Stockhausen, *Mira*, 76-7, 83.

⁶³¹ Exodus 12. 12-13, 23, 29-30.

⁶³² Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 411.

⁶³³ Andreas Engel, *Annales Marchiae Brandenburgicae = Das ist Ordentliche Verzeichnus vn[d] beschreibung der fürnemsten vnd gedenckwürdigsten Märckischen Jahrgeschichten vnd Historien, so sich vom 416. Jahr vor Christi Geburt, bis auff 1596. Jahr im Churfürstenthumb Brandenburg, vnd dazu gehörenden Landen vnd Herrschafften, von Jahr zu Jahr begeben vnd zugetragen haben.* (Frankfurt an der Oder, 1598), 345.

⁶³⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 415-6; Goldschmidt set his version in 1351 Goldschmidt, *Höllische Morpheus*, 149-150.

⁶³⁵ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 292-3.

⁶³⁶ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 418, 1043.

⁶³⁷ John Beaumont, *An Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise of Spirits, Apparitions, Witchcrafts, and other Magical Practices. Containing an Account of the Genii or Familiar Spirits, both Good and Bad, that are said to attend Men in this Life; and what Sensible Perceptions some Persons have had of them: (particularly the Author's own Experience for many Years.) Also of Appearances of Spirits after Death; Divine Dreams,*

the Scottish Highlands with resemblances to the Irish banshee. The spirit Lady Ann Fanshawe (1625-1680) encountered at the window of the house in which she was staying in Ireland in 1649, bore remarkable similarities to the banshee.⁶³⁸ The *Klagmutter* was a spirit in Germany that would howl at the door of a household from which one would die.⁶³⁹ The Saxon pastor Christian Lehmann recounted how belief in the *Klagmutter* existed in his region.⁶⁴⁰ One story involved a cobbler, Nicolaus Köhler, set in 1626 in Ober Wiesenthal who heard it from the woodpile and yard outside his house and next to a house where two people lay dying.⁶⁴¹ Johann Beer claimed he heard the *Weh-Klage*, another variation of the wailing spirit, with his own ears when he was fourteen in Sankt Georgen in Upper Austria, one August evening around nine. A dreadful shrieking, like the crying of cats, was heard at the door. News soon came through from Schörffling, a neighbouring settlement that his four-year-old sister, Susanna, who had been staying with his grandmother, had died at the exact hour of the howling.⁶⁴² Adam Bernd, in his famous autobiography, recorded how over three successive nights in 1706 when he was thirty and based around Leipzig, he dreamt of death portents, one of which was the *Weheklage*. Though initially tempted to dismiss it as nonsense, the death of his sister shortly afterwards during a difficult birth seemed to confirm the validity of this superstition.⁶⁴³

In some houses, sounds of walking on the stairs or the closing of doors betokened death.⁶⁴⁴ The noise, 'as if a meal-sack fell down from on high upon the boards of the chamber' was a German portent well known enough for even Aubrey to mention.⁶⁴⁵ Knockings on doors, tables, and chairs, banging and the sounds of disturbances which when investigated revealed nothing were all potential signs that somebody linked to the household would die, or that news of their death would arrive soon.⁶⁴⁶ Aubrey claimed he heard 'three distinct knocks on

Divinations, Second Sighted Persons, &c. Likewise the Power of Witches, and the reality of other Magical Operations, clearly asserted. With a refutation of Dr. Bekker's World Bewitch'd; and other authors that have opposed the Belief of them. (London, 1705), 115.

⁶³⁸ Anne Harrison Fanshawe, *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, written by herself. To which are added, Extracts from the Correspondence of Sir Richard Fanshawe* (London, 1830), 92.

⁶³⁹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 1013-4; Lecouteux, *Encyclopedia*, 312.

⁶⁴⁰ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 189, 784, 931.

⁶⁴¹ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 784.

⁶⁴² Beer, *Sein Leben*, 113-4.

⁶⁴³ Bernd, *Eigene Lebens-Beschreibung*, 416-420.

⁶⁴⁴ Johann Justus Ebeling and Georg Wilhelm Wegner, *Allgemeiner sehr curieuser und immerwährender Hauß- und Reise-Calender, oder Oeconomisch- und einem jeden nützlichtes Hauß- und Handbuch* (Berlin, 1733), 6.

⁶⁴⁵ Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 167.

⁶⁴⁶ Bräuner, *Physicalisch= und Historisch= Erörterte Curiositaeten*, 525, 536-7.

the beds-head, as if it had been with a ruler or ferula', a few days before his father's death.⁶⁴⁷ Johann Jacob Bräuner, weighing up the cause of such warnings, wondered whether they were caused by a guardian angel or an evil spirit. He tended to ascribe the phenomena to an evil angel as God would not want us to know the precise moment of our death.⁶⁴⁸ Bells were another object closely associated with death warnings.⁶⁴⁹ The north German pastor Peter Goldschmidt recorded how his parents who lived in a house in the Norderstrasse in Husum had a remarkable piece of furniture. It was called the *TodtenTisch* as it would unerringly make sounds like crying, wailing and howling whenever someone in the neighbourhood would die and subsequently be laid out on it.⁶⁵⁰ A house in Kitsford in Devon would have holes eaten in its parlour tapestry just before a family member would die.⁶⁵¹

David Lederer, in an article on ghost belief in early modern Bavaria, noted that Johann Fugger, 'a highly respected member of the mighty Augsburg banking dynasty, held the same views as any Hungarian peasant might' when it came to ghosts and the supernatural in the mid-sixteenth century.⁶⁵² Perhaps in portents, we can see a clear example of a belief that both rich and poor, the great and the not so great shared. It was one that was potentially askance with theological orthodoxy. However, it was one, as the evidence shows, was widespread, one where person and group were linked to place through the memory of a recurrent form of supernatural or preternatural activity at a site.

Violence and Strangers

One notable aspect of castle spirits was their capacity for violence. This could be quite mild, as in *The Humourist's* description of elite ghosts which would 'never fail to kick him, and cuff him and toss him in a Blanket' if 'any Man presume to lye in their Beds'.⁶⁵³ It could go to the other extreme as happened to the poor serving boy who mocked the spirit Hütgin, which haunted Hüdemuhlen castle in the 1580s, and for his cheek was dismembered and dumped

⁶⁴⁷ Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 166.

⁶⁴⁸ Bräuner, *Physicalisch= und Historisch= Erörterte Curiositaeten*, 536-7.

⁶⁴⁹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 1032-35.

⁶⁵⁰ Goldschmidt, *Höllische Morpheus*, 365-6.

⁶⁵¹ Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 219-20.

⁶⁵² Lederer, 'Living', 33.

⁶⁵³ Gordon, *Humourist*, 86-7.

in a barrel.⁶⁵⁴ A similar legend existed for the Chimmecke house spirit attached to a castle in Pomerania.⁶⁵⁵ There was the famous story of Borstorff, the chief equerry to the house of Brandenburg and a 'stout German fellow', who confronted the White Lady on the stairs of the castle, calling her 'an old sacramental whore', who had still not drunk her fill of the blood of princes. Grabbed by the throat, he was thrown down the steps and badly injured.⁶⁵⁶ Francisci related the tale of a ghost in a certain German castle which appeared like a monk with deep, fiery eyes and carrying a set of keys who attacked those who mocked him.⁶⁵⁷

Some of these stories clearly followed a narrative modelled on the mocker receiving his comeuppance, one popular in the anti-atheist ghost tracts of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What is less clear is the extent to which these literary tropes reflected oral traditions within castles themselves. Spirits upbraiding lazy servants and naughty children were indeed suggestive of a disciplinary matrix of story-telling, one which the authors were potentially mining both as a genre and a source of legend material. Not merely was the person punished sceptical of the existence or power of spirits, but they also did not show the deference due from one inferior rank. If they had shown that deference from the beginning, they would never have been injured. The demonologist Johann Wier, when describing the Hütgin spirit attached to the household of the bishop of Hildesheim, noted that 'he injured no one, if he was not injured himself but he remembered wrongs and mockings and paid back those who inflicted abuse on him'.⁶⁵⁸

A similar theme extended to stories of strangers in castles. One such tale was linked to a castle in Austria where the ghost of an old man would walk and until then, had never done anyone any harm. A new owner took control of the property and was determined to rid himself of the ghost only to be badly mauled in a confrontation with it.⁶⁵⁹ The anti-atheist legend is again prominent here. However, it is worth remembering the Lutheran dictum regarding authority in the household and the need to state that one was master in one's own house when dealing with spirits. The only interaction Lavater could recommend with spirits, one that Luther had recommended, was to tell them that 'I am the owner of this house, and not thou, vnto whom

⁶⁵⁴ Bräuner, *Physicalisch= und Historisch= Erörterte Curiositaeten*, 281-3.

⁶⁵⁵ Waldschmidt, *Pythonissa Endorea*, 486.

⁶⁵⁶ Goldschmidt, *Höllische Morpheus*, 166-7.

⁶⁵⁷ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 476-8.

⁶⁵⁸ Wier, *Witches*, 74.

⁶⁵⁹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 466-67.

ther is an other place apoynted'.⁶⁶⁰ For the true owners of these castles and those who gave them due respect, such spirits presented no physical danger. The insider would have known better. The new owner of the castle, bought with money, was a parvenu at best.

Interlopers often faced a concerted attack from the spirits of a place. Swedish soldiers quartered at Neuhaus castle in Bohemia were attacked by the White Lady when they failed to distribute the traditional dole of a sweet broth to the poor, a custom the White Lady had supposedly instituted when alive.⁶⁶¹ Powdine House in Annandale was reputed to be haunted and in 1651 English soldiers stationed there were 'soundly beaten by that then irresistible inhabitant'.⁶⁶² The most prominent example of this in the English record was the Woodstock haunting of 1649 when Parliamentary commissioners came to survey the royal palace there and 'took up their lodging in the King's own Rooms, the Bed-Chamber, and Withdrawing-Room'.⁶⁶³ Over the months of October and early November, the commissioners were subject to various forms of supernatural attack which eventually forced them from the building. One night 'the similitude of a Hoof, striking the Candle and Candlestick into the middle of the Bed-Chamber' was observed. That and other manifestations convinced the parliamentary party that 'the Devil (for that was the name they gave their nightly-Guest)', was plaguing them.⁶⁶⁴

One is tempted to frame the story as a form of Royalist resistance against the intruders, orchestrated to look like a haunting. Indeed, even if this was the case, it followed the idea that the commissioners were strangers and enemies who showed scant respect to such a royal and sacred site and as a result, received their deserved comeuppance. Both sides understood the palace as a place of power. For the hotter parliamentarians, it was potentially a site of evil with its direct links to the king; for the Royalists, it was a sacred site but one that fought back more successfully than most against their enemies. It followed the model that outsiders did not respect the site nor maintain the values of that place and as a result, were harassed by the forces present.

⁶⁶⁰ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 192.

⁶⁶¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 69-71.

⁶⁶² Baxter, *Certainty*, 87.

⁶⁶³ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 403.

⁶⁶⁴ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 407.

Servants and Great Houses

Servants were often very closely linked to ghost seeing in early modern accounts. They occupied a unique position with their proximity to their betters, at once part of the household but still socially subservient. They most probably knew the whole house as well, if not better, than the masters as well as the gossip about the family they served. They were also the lower classes the elites interacted with the most.

They occasionally figured as intermediaries in the interaction between the ghost and the heirs, one entrusted to convey the wishes of the dead to the living. The ghost of Sir George Villiers (1550-1606) that appeared to his former servant, Parker, with a warning for his son, the Duke of Buckingham (1592-1628), was the most prominent example of this.⁶⁶⁵ Schmitt noted the same role of servants in medieval ghost stories, one where 'vassalic kinship did not disappear after the death of the lord or of his man' and where 'through the intermediary of their vassals-one dead, the other alive-that the old and the new lords' affirmed the transfer of power and new relations between them.⁶⁶⁶ The persistence of this trope in early modern texts possibly reflected the popularity of this as a component in the folkloric ghost story tradition. It is also one that gave agency to the servant in the narrative, one that may have appealed to a retainer and non-elite audience as a narrative prototype.

Early modern texts frequently condemned servants for the ghost stories they told the children of the elite whom they served.⁶⁶⁷ Indeed, the ghost story collector Graben zum Stein mentioned how at many courts in Germany in the early eighteenth century, serving maids were forbidden from telling their young charges any frightening tales.⁶⁶⁸ The problem was that instead of raising fearless young men, schooled in the Word or Reason, future generations of the elite were being infected in the nursery by peasant women scaring them senseless with the same silly tales as they told their own brood. At times, one was not sure if a generation of cowards was being raised out of lazy ineptitude or mere ignorance by their

⁶⁶⁵ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 345-6.

⁶⁶⁶ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 193.

⁶⁶⁷ John Locke, *The Educational Writings of John Locke*, ed. J. W. Adamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 106, 160.

⁶⁶⁸ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 288.

lower-class charges, or whether the scary stories of the nurses were deliberately told, to inflict long-term damage.

It was the ambiguity in the relationship of ghosts to servants that is most interesting. At times, we get the textual impression, that the elites saw their servants as gullible and ghost-ridden. At other times, it is more evident that playing the ghost was a tactic to cover their own horseplay or as a form of protest to their betters. Taillepie mentioned how servants would report hearing noise at night as if the kitchen was being 'turned topsy turvy and everything spanwhengled and smashed to smithereens', only to find in the morning, 'all has been in apple-pie order and not a kilterment displaced or disturbed'.⁶⁶⁹ Horseplay could potentially occur more at Martinmas, the traditional time for new staff to join the existing household, one that possibly involved rites of initiation.⁶⁷⁰ Folklorists have noted how 'coddling', or the practice of telling tall tales often occurs between newcomers and old hands as a form of initiation into their new setting.⁶⁷¹ Servants were also accused of using ghosts as cover for their own unruliness. At the start of Addison's play, *The Drummer* (1715), we are introduced to the butler, coachman and gardener, drunk, with the excuse that it was the best defence against the ghost and demanding double wages to boot. Meanwhile, Abigail, the chief servant, exploited the cover of the eponymous ghostly drummer to maintain her love affair with a Mr Fantome. She told her paramour that the house in which the story was set was 'the purest place in the world for you to play your tricks in', as 'none of the family that knows every hole and corner in it, besides myself'.⁶⁷² Sometimes the fairies or house spirits could be blamed instead for misbehaviour. A 1730 text noted how 'they were brought into all families by the Servants' and that if the master and mistress went to bed early, 'the Men and Maids, if they had a Game at Ramps, and blunder'd up Stairs, or jumbled a Chair, the next Morning everyone would swear 'twas the Fairies', and that they heard them stamping up and down the Stairs all Night'.⁶⁷³

Ghosts could also be used as a means of revenge by the servants. Michael Hunter drew attention to how servants were believed to be behind the famous Tedworth haunting of 1661-

⁶⁶⁹ Taillepie, *Treatise*, 79.

⁶⁷⁰ R. Clarke, *A Natural History of Ghosts: 500 Years of Hunting for Proof* (London: Particular Books, 2013), 301.

⁶⁷¹ Mullen, *I Heard the Old Fishermen*, 148.

⁶⁷² Addison, *Drummer*, 4, 6.

⁶⁷³ Merryman, *Round about our Coal-Fire*, 44-5.

1662 when the house of Mr Mompesson was plagued by a phantom drummer. It was claimed that the haunting was fabricated 'by two Young Women in the House, with a design to scare thence Mr Monpesson's Mother', and that 'the unrulynesse of Servants who apprehend that if they leave me, none other will come to me, and so they become my Masters'.⁶⁷⁴ The seasonable hours it kept as 'it seldome knock't after 12 at night or before 6 in the morning', and its failure to play a tune despite supposedly being a devil also threw suspicion on the whole affair.⁶⁷⁵

Conclusion

Castles were places where a variety of supernatural tropes were observed. Spirits of the damned, Purgatorial ghosts, portents, tutelary spirits and the devil himself all figured in tales surrounding these buildings. It is in the early modern sources where one finds the true beginnings of the haunted gothic castle. Ghost stories served to negotiate memories of place and power, to reaffirm legitimacy and to assert the political order of the day and the duties of the rulers as well as the ruled. The broken and ruined turrets of earlier fortresses and seats of power now haunted by spectres were a reminder of not only of human transience but also of the failure of previous rulers to maintain the standards of morality and duty expected from those in great authority.

⁶⁷⁴ M. Hunter, 'New Light on the "Drummer of Tedworth": Conflicting Narratives of Witchcraft in Restoration England', *Historical Research*, 78:201 (2005), 322.

⁶⁷⁵ Hunter, 'New Light', 329.

Inns and Transients

The haunted inn and traveller ghosts are two of the most enduring tropes in supernatural literature. The earliest surviving version is in Cicero's (106-43 BC) famous tale of the two Arcadian travellers arriving in Megara, one of whom who stayed in an inn that night, the other staying with a local friend. During the night, the latter was awoken by a dream of his friend at the inn, begging him to rescue him from the plotting innkeeper. He ignored this and was troubled by another dream in which his friend appeared, telling him that he had already been murdered by the innkeeper and that his body would be carted out of the city in a wagonload of dung later that morning. Acting now on the apparition's message, the traveller went to the city gate that morning, found the innkeeper transporting the corpse and thus ensured that the killer faced justice.⁶⁷⁶ The tale had widespread currency in the early modern era, being present in many collections of relations and stories. The theme and content served as a model for early modern stories and reports of hostelries and rented lodgings haunted by their former guests, where the greed of landlords overturned existing laws of hospitality in the most violent manner. One such literary tale, closely mirroring the Athenodorus story, recounted a French nobleman called Robert, staying at an inn in the Romandy region of Switzerland who was led from his room by a spectre one night to a nearby well. It told him it was the ghost of a merchant murdered the previous evening by the innkeepers and thrown down the well. Robert stayed there until morning when he alerted the authorities who apprehended the criminals.⁶⁷⁷

Though Owen Davies claimed that few pubs were haunted before the twentieth century, the early modern sources suggest otherwise.⁶⁷⁸ Inns were sites around which supernatural legends could be easily crafted. Their pimps, whores, drunkards and gluttons were tame in comparison to the highwaymen, robbers and murderers one could also encounter there. They

⁶⁷⁶ D. Ogden, *Magic, Witchcraft, and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds: A Sourcebook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 158; Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 70-2; Taillepie, *Treatise*, 58-9.

⁶⁷⁷ Georg Philipp Harsdörffer, *Der Grosse Schauplatz jämmerlicher Mordgeschichte Bestehend in CC. traurigen Begebenheiten Mit vielen merkwürdigen Erzehlungen / neu üblichen Gedichten / Lehrreichen Sprüchen / scharffsinnigen / artigen / Schertzfragen und Antworten / etc. Verdolmetscht und mit einem Bericht von den Sinnbildern wie auch hundert Exempeln derselben als einer neuen Zugabe / auß den berühmsten Autoribus, durch Ein Mitglied der Hochlöblichen Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft* (Hamburg, 1656), 166; Bräuner, *Physicalisch= und Historisch= Erörterte Curiositaeten*, 268-9.

⁶⁷⁸ Davies, *Haunted*, 62-3.

were places of transience and liminality, both for the locals who managed and frequented them and for the travellers who relied upon them. For locals, they were a place of interaction with the outside world. Travellers would bring coin, goods and news of affairs beyond their borders. They would be points of departure to the opportunities in the wider world outside the local community. However, travellers and strangers were also potentially dangerous and polluting. They were not locals. They were unknown and did not fit into local ties of kinship. They were outsiders who came from the same world of tax collectors, military recruiters, lawless armies and soldiery and agents of the central authorities who only ever seemed to take and give nothing in return. All of these made the inn their own base in the local community. Likewise, for travellers, inns were nodal points on the road, landmarks between their departure and destination point. They were places of potential danger, sites where travellers had to interact and overnight in close physical proximity to each other and be wary of both the strange locals and fellow wayfarers.

Inns and pubs were places where bodies of murder victims and others would be brought, and whose trade would profit as a result. The bones of the victims found in the house haunted by the spirit of the murderous midwife Mrs Adkins in Middle Row, Holborn, were brought to the nearby Cheshire Cheese pub in the same street.⁶⁷⁹ They were places where stories were told and where these tales and other news, were collected by the budding journalists and printers of the time.⁶⁸⁰ In Addison's play, *The Drummer* (1715), one of the servants suggested that 'this Spirit will bring a power of Custom to the George', and that he himself might set up an ale shop called 'the Sign of the Drum' if the haunting continued.⁶⁸¹

James C. Scott underlined 'the importance of the tavern or its equivalent as a site of anti-hegemonic discourse' for the lower classes, one the coffee shop would increasingly provide for the middling classes.⁶⁸² Craig Koslofsky noted how coffee shops and taverns were places of discussion for the new philosophies condemned as atheistical by many of the religious authorities of the late seventeenth century. He drew attention to a pamphlet, *The Character of a Town-gallant*, where the namesake not merely enjoyed a debauched nocturnal existence

⁶⁷⁹ Anon, *Great News from Middle-Row in Holbourn, or, A True Relation of a Dreadful Ghost which appeared in the Shape of one Mrs. Adkins to several Persons, but especially to a Maid-servant at the Adam and Eve, all in a Flame of fire on Tuesday-night last, being the 16th of this Instant March, 1679* (London, 1680), 3.

⁶⁸⁰ Handley, *Visions*, 72-3.

⁶⁸¹ Addison, *Drummer*, 1.

⁶⁸² Scott, *Domination*, 121-2.

but whose visits to cafes 'has taught him to Laugh at Spirits, and maintain there are no angels, but those in Petticoats' and that the devil was the 'Parson's Bugbear'.⁶⁸³

As liminal places and sites of transience, inns were places where drink, women and violence were part of a dangerous cycle as reflected in the supernatural tales of the time. The medieval legend of Bishop Germanus, as retold by Luther in his *Tischreden*, recalled a night when the pious ecclesiast had to bed down in an inn which was suddenly invaded by demons.⁶⁸⁴ Though a man of God could quickly discern the demonic nature of such spirits, it was much harder for the normal mortal to ascertain the identity of those who shared his room at night, not least where sleeping arrangements were so ambiguous. Peter Goldschmidt narrated the tale of a German nobleman who stayed at an inn near Fuenterrabia on the Navarre-Spanish border which was full except for a haunted room which he took. The nobleman was awakened at night to find his room full of spirits having a banquet with fine silverware. One of them repeatedly insisted on him drinking a toast, but he refused and as the invitation changed to threats, was only saved by uttering the name of God, at which everything disappeared. In the morning, he could clearly see holes in the room's wall caused by the hellish liquor that splashed when the spirits had vanished.⁶⁸⁵ A similar story is found in Erasmus Francisci's *Höllische Proteus* though this time it is set in Flensburg in the Kingdom of Denmark during the time of Frederick III (1609-1670) in the seventeenth century.⁶⁸⁶ Goldschmidt also recounted a story set in 1692 in the week before Easter when he was in Copenhagen, renting a room at the inn called 'Die Stadt Münster'. He was disturbed early in the morning by the sight of a cavalier and beautiful woman accompanied by a dog with a fine collar which lay on his bed. As with such stories, he initially assumed they were real until exasperated by their refusal to answer his requests for them to leave, he bid them go to hell, which they promptly did and vanished.⁶⁸⁷ The tale recounted by the Neapolitan lawyer Alessandro Alessandri (1461-1523), which he claimed happened to his friend, was another story attributed to the humanist that cropped up repeatedly in the literature of the time. Journeying back to Rome from the funeral

⁶⁸³ C. Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 240; Anon, *The Character of a Town-gallant exposing the Extravagant Fopperies of som[e] Vain Self-conceited Pretenders to Gentility and Good Breeding* (London, 1675), 4.

⁶⁸⁴ Luther, *Tischreden*, 6: 218-9; Bromhall, *History*, 10.

⁶⁸⁵ Goldschmidt, *Höllische Morpheus*, 189-192.

⁶⁸⁶ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 424-29.

⁶⁸⁷ Goldschmidt, *Höllische Morpheus*, 404-6.

of a friend, his acquaintance was horrified to see the same friend whom he had buried earlier, strip off and crawl into bed alongside him. Sensing his disgust of its touch, 'which seemed so extreemly cold, as no ice in the world might be compared vnto it,' the entity left him, though as it did, it looked 'very lowringly vppon him'.⁶⁸⁸

One was never totally sure of the identity of fellow travellers or guests, whether they were honest or planned harm. There was the tale of a wayward and wicked son travelling to Rome, who unknown to himself, was accompanied into an inn one night by the Devil. As he knelt down to pray, the Devil revealed himself in full fury, a destructive but sobering experience for the youth who henceforth changed his life.⁶⁸⁹ An account of a gathering at a pub in London in 1641 conjured up a more contemporary fear regarding identity, namely clandestine Catholicism. A surreptitious meeting of papists at an ale-house in the Strand, who were 'at their Exercises in an Upper Chamber', was suddenly broken up by the Devil himself who appeared in monstrous form amongst them.⁶⁹⁰

Bed hopping, mistaken identities and ghosts were all frequently met tropes in the contemporary literature. Many of these occurred in inns, where controlled boundaries at night between the sexes were more fluid in darkness and the liminal environment of the hostelry, and where the potential existed for error regarding the allocation of rooms or beds. Taillepiéd, recounting the places, which included the graveyard and gibbets, 'where unhappie youthes doe make their resort to play the Spirit', noted that 'where they have a hope, either to carowse the good wine, or to injoy their lascivious loves' that the 'olde French proverbe' was true: 'On sont filettes et bon vin/ Cest là où haute le lutin'.⁶⁹¹

The story of Martin Schookius, a professor at Frankfurt on the Oder and a sceptic of the supernatural who got his comeuppance, was likewise recurrent in German sources. Again, it played on the trope of an inn, with all its rooms filled except for one which was known to be haunted. The proud professor, sure in his knowledge disregarded the warnings, took the room

⁶⁸⁸ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 68.

⁶⁸⁹ Bromhall, *History*, 29.

⁶⁹⁰ Anon, *A Relation of a Strange Apparition in an Ale-house next Doore to the White Horse, against Sommerset-House in the Strand where a Company of Papists were at their Exercises : As is conceived the Devill in an Ugly Black Shape disturbing them, and tea-ring the Rugge and scattering it in Pieces up and down the Roome: With a Relation of a Iudgement that strangely fell umpon one at Mr. Mundayes House in Little Brittain: Who whilst he was cursing of Mr. Burton, Mr. Prinne and Doctor Bastwicke his Eares fell a bleeding to the Amazement of the Beholders* (London, 1641).

⁶⁹¹ Le Loyer, *Treatise*, 80.

and settled down to sleep. At midnight, he was disturbed by a banging and marching and then the appearance of 'a great tall man in the form of a soldier with a hideous visage, a long beard and fiery eyes who stood before him'. The ghost of the soldier tossed him out of bed and took his place while the professor, who now saw the errors of his ways, cringed on the floor until dawn.⁶⁹² The early modern soldier, a figure of transience, disorder and immorality, was associated with inns through his own inherent nature and vices and by the employment of these places for recruitment, quarters, and recreation in all its forms. Acting in lieu of field hospitals, they were also sites of death. In *Tom Jones*, we find the comic interlude where a sentry sees the figure of a bloody and bandaged Tom in the inn's passage at midnight and mistakes him for his ghost, believing that Tom has just died from his wounds.⁶⁹³

These stories clearly had their own agenda beyond the immediate setting, though, located in hostelries and inns, they played upon the assumptions of those places and the narrative was structured accordingly. Demon drink, loose women, deviant, uncontrolled sexualities and the memory of soldiers, their vices and war all combined in this most liminal of places. Indeed, Lavater, in the same vein as the examples above, claimed that inns were notorious for the supernaturally themed pranks played on guests:

It is an vsuall and common thing that yong men merily disposed, when they trauell by the way, coming to theyr Inne at night, tye roapes to the bed side, or to the couerlet or garments, or else hide themselues vnder the bed, and so counterfeiting themselues to bee Spirits, deceyue and mocke their fellows.⁶⁹⁴

One could claim that as a liminal site with alcohol, youth and sex working in tandem, that such disorder and play was tolerated. One could also reasonably suggest that these pranks reflected anxieties and expectations of such places and played directly on these fears already mentioned. This horseplay, if engineered by local youths in liminal places, could be understood as a form of policing the boundary by exploiting supernatural tropes. This reaffirmed the youths' own status within their group as they passed into manhood and the boundaries of the community in question.

⁶⁹² Anon, *Vielförmige Hintzelmann*, 60-62 'ein grosser langer Kerl in Gestalt eines Kriegeres=Mannes/ mit einem abscheulichem Gesichte/ langen Baart und feuerigen Augen vor ihm stund'; Bräuner, *Physicalisch= und Historisch= Erörterte Curiositaeten*, 266-7; Goldschmidt, *Höllische Morpheus*, 134-5.

⁶⁹³ Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones* (London: Wordsworth Editions, 1999), 265-8.

⁶⁹⁴ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 22.

Travellers, as transients, were particularly vulnerable to predatory attacks. They lay outside local kin and social networks, the gold they often carried on them made them a tempting target and it was easy for them to disappear. In unaccounted deaths in inns, it could potentially be hard to prove the difference between natural death, murder and suicide as the background of the deceased were unclear. Furthermore, as non-members of the communities they passed through, questions lay over their rights of interment if they died or were killed on the road. Good death was death at home, peacefully and in the fullness of age, surrounded by family and friends who would ensure the correct rites of passage were fulfilled and succession to any inheritances was clear. In the moments of a loved one's death, signs could be gleaned concerning the person's potential salvation. Bad death was death on the street, life cut violently short, potentially through an act of betrayal, among strangers and with no one to guarantee a proper burial. A funeral and thus the rites of passage should not merely be understood as the formal interment of the cadaver in the earth but the entire process of preparing the corpse for burial and holding a wake which could only be done by one's kith and kin. This process though very evident in folkloric and anthropological studies of communities from the nineteenth century onwards is largely invisible to the early modern historian excepting the occasional gem such as Aubrey recorded for local funerary practices in England and Wales in the seventeenth century. In Yorkshire, he noted how the body was waked, and how prayers, smoking, card playing and games involving misrule and inversion also occurred.⁶⁹⁵ In Hereford, 'Sinne-Eaters' would eat and drink over the corpse, thus taking on the defunct's sins, which 'freed him (or her) from walking after they were dead'.⁶⁹⁶

Uncertainty regarding the integrity of innkeepers and the degree to which their hospitality could be trusted was a recurrent theme, with a long pedigree, in contemporary sources. There was the famous tale of two old women innkeepers on the road to Rome who would change guests into animals which they then sold on, a story that expressed these very anxieties.⁶⁹⁷ A lone traveller or guest with a heavy bag of coin was a tempting target to rob and if needs be, dispose of. There was a report in 1677 of the discovery of a skull wearing a linen cap embroidered with letters on the grounds of a hostelry and the subsequent sighting of a ghost. This was linked to the disappearance of a traveller many years before. It was recorded that

⁶⁹⁵ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 30.

⁶⁹⁶ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 35-6.

⁶⁹⁷ Wier, *Witches*, 192; Pen, *Pleasant Treatise*, 22-3; Bromhall, *History*, 107-8.

‘about Thirty years since a Gentleman lately arriving from beyond the Seas came to that Inne, and by the weight of his Cloak-bag was supposed to have good store of money’. The ghost that then appeared declared that ‘he was murdered in that house for his money’. This led to the arrest and prosecution of a woman servant.⁶⁹⁸

Ghosts of pedlars, merchants and salesmen are common tropes in regional folklores. Judith Richardson, studying hauntings in the Hudson Valley in New York State, interpreted pedlar ghosts as serving ‘as a two-sided symbol of a troubled rootlessness, representing mysterious and disruptive presences within the familiar landscape of more settled community, while also emblemizing the potential perilousness of unfamiliar territories to strangers of all sorts’.⁶⁹⁹ The workings of Providence were represented as going some way to mitigate the anxieties associated with travel, transients and inns. Murder is most efficient if executed secretly with no surviving evidence, with the corpse itself being the chief item of proof. Thus, the apparition of a ghost in lieu of a cadaver was evidence of a crime. Apparitions of the actual deceased could be one form whereby an evil deed originally committed in secret was revealed and guilt apportioned to the relevant parties. The ghost of Mr Bower appeared to a man in Guildford prison sharing the same cell as two others detained under suspicion of his murder. The witness of the apparition, though a stranger to the locality, described the deceased exactly and thus encouraged the authorities to investigate the detained more closely whereupon their two alibis fell apart and their convictions were secured.⁷⁰⁰ Inns were also places where, as strangers, they had little if any prior knowledge of the locality and thus if a ghost did appear and reveal evil deeds in the past, the Providential textual narrative became even more forceful. It would also explain why only a stranger would take a room or house that everyone else local knew was haunted. One example of this was the famous tale of the butcher of Stockholm who rented his rooms to a visiting noblewoman, having previously murdered his

⁶⁹⁸ Anon, *Strange, but True, Relation*, 6-8; Anon, *The Wonder of this Age: Or, God's miraculous Revenge against Murder. Being a Relation of an undoubted Truth out of the West. How the Skull of a Person (murdered about Thirty Years agoe, in an Inn) was found with a Linnen Cap thereon, still whole, with the two Letters wherewith it was marked, plain to be seen, though it has lain so many Years in the Earth. How likewise an Apparition oblig'd one that was lately come to live in that House, to divulge it ... The Truth of this Relation will be attested by many Whole-sale-men that were at the last Fair at Exeter ... And now, upon the Licensers Enquiry, since the Writing of this Paper, the Particulars have been verifi'd by divers other Persons, and by one that affirms he was present at the Examination* (London, 1677).

⁶⁹⁹ Richardson, *Possessions*, 30-1.

⁷⁰⁰ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 349-51.

wife there. She had no knowledge of the locality or deed. The ghost of the victim appeared to the lady who ensured that justice was done to her treacherous husband.⁷⁰¹

To conclude this section, travellers were one of the groups of people most commonly associated with seeing ghosts and phantom lights at night.⁷⁰² Journeying through strange, unknown parts, travellers could easily 'take rocks and crags, trees and large stones, to be phantoms of the night'.⁷⁰³ Inns were often located in desolate places far from civilisation or deep in the forest, where guests could claim they heard the Wild Hunt around them during the night.⁷⁰⁴ On occasion, the inn itself would be invaded by demons from the outside as in the case of the legend of Bishop Germanus. Furthermore, while travelling, people shared these ghost stories, most probably in the common rooms of the very inns we have been discussing. Many of these tales joined the corpus of ghost legends with similar tropes found across Europe, spread by travellers, soldiers and writers who then recorded these stories which were then further disseminated in print. At one level, these legends and tales became part of what the experience of travel was. They also showed the limited extent of state control over its territory when it came to trade and transit despite its best efforts, as evinced by the landscape of punishment in the number of gallows and execution sites that littered the roadsides. Providence played a recurrent role in many of the ghost legends involving murders and was an attempt to reassure the public and warn the potential malefactor of its panoptic gaze and that even with the most secret of crimes, which the conditions of travel helped to conceal even more, that truth would out and justice be done.

⁷⁰¹ Bräuner, *Physicalisch= und Historisch= Erörterte Curiositaeten*, 271-3; Harsdörffer, *Grosse Schauplatz*, 246-7; Peter Lauremberg, *Neue und vermehrte Acerra Philologica Das ist: Sieben Hundert Außerlesene, Nützliche / lustige und denckwürdige Historien und Discursen Aus den berühmtesten Griechischen und Lateinischen Scribenten zusammen getragen Darinnen zu finden Die meisten Gedichte der Poeten / von Göttern und Göttinnen, die fürnehmsten Geschichte der alten Römer und Griechen, etliche gebräuchliche Sprichwörter / unterschiedliche natürliche Dinge Allen Liebhabern der Historien zur Ergetzung /insonderheit der studierenden Jugend zu mercklicher Übung und Wissenschaftt beförderlich Mit Sr. Königl. Maj. und Churf. Durchl. zu Sachsen allergnädigsten privilegio* (Frankfurt am Main, 1717), 934-6.

⁷⁰² Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 88; Taillepie, *Treatise*, 94.

⁷⁰³ Taillepie, *Treatise*, 30.

⁷⁰⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 529-30.

Chapter Conclusions

In this chapter we have looked at the vital role place played in ghost stories. We have seen how stories shaped community identities, how they set local apart from stranger and how they expressed fears about liminal places and the boundary. We saw how Catholics and Protestants understood the spirits that haunted these places and how these spectres acted as dreadful examples and reminders of the consequences of sin and failure to abide by the principles of a Christian life. We have looked at the spirits that haunted the wilds and ruins, and how Protestantism interpreted these as Lucifer's fallen hosts encroaching on the world of man. We have also encountered ghosts of monks in ruined abbeys and churches and how these spectres helped construct a vision of the Catholic other, based both in the past and abroad. The section on graveyards dealt with the numerous ghostly tropes seen in this most haunted of places and how these spirits affirmed the importance of keeping the cemetery pure from any pollution. The graveyard revenant, a trope that Christianity had never fully tamed, testified to the havoc that could be wreaked by failing to abide by the correct rituals and checks on the dead. We looked at the haunted house and how these acted as memoria where morality was inscribed on the landscape. Buried treasure as a cause of haunting, and solution when unearthed was also examined alongside the trope of the miser ghost. From there we examined haunted castles and spirits tied to place and kin that warned of approaching death. Finally, we arrived at the haunted inn where we encountered ghosts of transients and murder victims whose sad fates were exposed by an all-seeing Providence.

Through all this, we have seen the importance place played in these legends and beliefs. Many spectral tropes were specific to a certain location and embodied the peculiar anxieties of those places. The boundaries, the wilds and inns were places where the forces of disorder were strongest and whose spirits embodied these anxieties. Meanwhile, graveyards, where the pollution inherent in the corpse was decommissioned, were sites where order was valued most, as apparent in the spirits seen there. Furthermore, these places were haunted long before the Reformation and they remained haunted long after. This was not the enduring legacy of ancient pagan or Catholic survivals which the Reformation had failed to eradicate despite the claims of writers such as Richard Bovet and others. Rather, place itself demanded and configured legends. Though the Reformation might now label these spirits as devils, the

same fears and anxieties continued to be expressed in the legends that grew up around places or in stories of haunted houses, castles and graveyards.

Chapter 2: Spirits and Ghosts of War

'Warres doe not only extinguish Religion and Lawes: but Superstition: & no suffimen is a greater fugator of Phantosmes, than gunpowder'.⁷⁰⁵

'The divine art of Printing and Gunpowder have frighted away Robin-good-fellow and the Fayries'.⁷⁰⁶

War provided the perfect setting for the ghost, a figure so reliant upon negotiating themes of memory, morality, pollution, trauma and death. War, according to Erasmus Francisci, was 'a daily school and teacher of morality'.⁷⁰⁷ It was a time when the Devil was rampant and prodigies in the heavens and earth heralded change and God's anger. Just as the deeds and fate of great men and kingdoms were signalled by such signs, common soldiers and their dependents too sought meaning in the apparitions they encountered. Furthermore, revulsion against the blood-letting of the British Civil Wars and Thirty Years War led not to the exorcising of the ghost but rather its conscription in the battle against the spectres of Sadducism and atheism which emerged in their aftermath. Indeed, it will be argued that war enabled not only ghost belief generally but also acted as a formative force in the creation of a Protestant spectre that could stand alone, freed of the Catholic Purgatorial trope that until then had haunted the imagination of Protestant divines. It was the memory of the ghost birthed in this age which has persisted to the modern, one preserved and cultivated in equal measure by the national folklorists of the nineteenth century.

Ghosts had a close relationship with war from biblical times. Saul, deserted by the Lord and fearing the hosts of the Philistines, turned to the Witch of Endor to invoke the shade of Samuel on the eve of the battle of Mount Gilboa. He sought knowledge on the outcome of the battle only to be told that he, his sons and kingdom would perish.⁷⁰⁸ A key text for Catholic theologians validating Purgatory was found in Maccabees when Judas ordered prayers for the

⁷⁰⁵ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 26.

⁷⁰⁶ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 68.

⁷⁰⁷ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 17. 'tägliche Schule und Lehrer der Sterblichkeit ist'.

⁷⁰⁸ 1 Samuel 28. 5-7, 15-19.

dead soldiers who had fallen in the wars against Antiochus.⁷⁰⁹ The same book, though dismissed as apocryphal by Protestants, included numerous apparitions of the dead. These included the deceased high priest Onias and Jeremiah who appeared to Judas, as well as his father and brothers who descended from heaven to fight alongside him against the armies of Syria, points which Augustin Calmet in the eighteenth century utilised to 'conclude that the Hebrews had no doubt that the spirits of the dead could return to earth'.⁷¹⁰

War and ghosts were even more closely intertwined in classical Greek and Roman texts. Classical ghostlore had four categories for those most likely to be restless undead. The *Aôroi* were 'those dead before their time', the *Biaiothanatoi* were 'dead by violence', the *Agamoi* were 'dead before marriage' and the *Ataphoi* were 'those deprived of burial'.⁷¹¹ All four groups were found on the battlefield. Notable examples of war ghost stories included the story of Pompeius Sextus employing the witch Erichtho who then temporarily revived a slain soldier on the Thessalian plain to ascertain the outcome of the civil war.⁷¹² Ghosts often appeared on the eve of battle as spirits of vengeance prophesying defeat and death for the one they visited, most famously the apparition of Caesar appearing to Brutus prior to Philippi (42 BC).⁷¹³ Battles were refought by ghosts such as at Marathon (490 BC) or predicted by phantom armies in the skies or signs in nature.⁷¹⁴ For the victors, abuse of their power and privilege were encapsulated in tales of lust gone sour leading to murder which then raised the ghosts of their victims. Cleonice's shade raged against Pausanias her violator and military governor of her city Byzantium.⁷¹⁵ Damon, the spirit that haunted the Chaeronea baths, had likewise been a man that had fallen victim to a cycle of violence initiated by his refusal to sate the lusts of the Roman commandant of his city.⁷¹⁶ The spectres of classical legends and histories haunted the early modern stage, their tales of the rise and fall of great men, of treason, violence, war and the ghosts that stalked them demanding revenge and justice, a sign of the popularity and longevity of these tropes. Their ghosts were just as frequently found in early modern learned treatises, cited as reliable precedents and examples to frame current

⁷⁰⁹ 2 Maccabees 12. 41–46.

⁷¹⁰ Calmet, *Phantom World*, 144.

⁷¹¹ Ogden, *Magic*, 146.

⁷¹² Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 143.

⁷¹³ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 55–6.

⁷¹⁴ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 54.

⁷¹⁵ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 144.

⁷¹⁶ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 54–5; Taillepié, *Treatise*, 44–5.

debates about spirits within. In Germany, Roman imperialism recorded its own hearsay concerning armies of the dead. Tacitus (c.56-120) recorded how the Harii tribe would 'with black shields and painted bodies... choose dark nights to fight, and by means of terror and shadow of a ghostly army they cause panic, since no enemy can bear a sight so unexpected and hellish'.⁷¹⁷ One wonders in this case if the Harii were playing on contemporary Germanic understandings of a nightly spirit host.

War figured in understandings of ghosts in antique and medieval Christianity too. Undoubtedly, the classical pagan legacy had fed into this. Augustine described how the sighting of the clash of two spirit armies in Campania in Italy was a portent of an impending battle.⁷¹⁸ The development of belief in saints as powerful spirits of place and supplication who would protect their shrines, settlements or devotees from their enemies was one example. Ghostly helpers, whether they were saints, the dead or angels would persist throughout this period. Another, as the middle ages progressed, was the incorporation of war and military tropes into that of the Purgatorial spirit. Ghosts of men who had committed foul deeds in unjust wars, who had robbed churches and been killed without absolution frequently occurred in the texts. Many of these were seen in the train of spectral armies that traversed the land, a trope that would increasingly become demonic as the middle ages waned.⁷¹⁹ Christian and contemporary late eleventh-century political concerns were overlaid on a spiritual trope that was potentially much older and pagan and ultimately had little to do with the military.

War was a perfect tableau onto which to craft ghost stories with young men dying violently before their time, their remains left unburied. It was a genre that was overwhelmingly masculine, recorded by men, about men doing men's work. Women, when they appeared, usually figured as victims, either killed or left without provision for themselves and their children though we do see their concerns addressed. Early modern Protestant writers were largely freed from the fear that their sources showed either female or papist contamination. Direct reference to the medieval tradition of Purgatory was usually ignored. Instead of monks as tellers and subjects for these tales, gentlemen of quality and army officers, the natural

⁷¹⁷ A. Orchard, *Cassell Dictionary of Norse Myth and Legend* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), 36.

⁷¹⁸ St Augustine, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans: A new translation by Henry Bettenson with an introduction by John O'Meara* (London: Penguin, 1972), 81.

⁷¹⁹ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 120.

protagonists in war, colonised this sphere as the purported sources and audiences too. In an age where the military uniform assumed greater status at court, the Devil appeared in many of these tales, no longer in the garb of a monk but in that of an army officer. This will become apparent in the chapter as we continue.

Classical tales and histories could be more comfortably accessed too, even for the hotter Protestant, as the ghosts of war in these were not supplicatory or lying spirits but those of vengeance, justice and punishment, all roles which the Devil played admirably in Protestant cosmology. Their subjects and authors were also invariably of high status and well known across elite and learned groups regardless of confession due to the emphasis on the classics in formal education and theatre. One should also acknowledge stories being spread by war, crossing Europe in the train of armies and foreign mercenaries. As Europe expanded into America and Asia, so too did their ghosts and supernatural beliefs which accompanied the merchants, sailors, soldiers, colonists, missionaries and many others who travelled and settled abroad.

Ghostly Battles and Armies

Phantom armies were a common trope in the period. Examples ranged from an army seen at Angouleme in France in 1608 to a muster near Braunschweig in the Gehern valley, 2 miles from Blomenau, at the entrance to its woods, where villagers counted over fourteen troops of ghostly riders divided among two armies, inspected and led by two black riders respectively.⁷²⁰ We also find accounts in the personal memorates of the day. The non-conformist minister Oliver Heywood (1630-1702) recorded a ghostly army that was seen near Sheffield by the river Don on 21 July 1661.⁷²¹ The Essex vicar Ralph Josselin (1616-1683) related that on 3 February 1654, his wife told him that she had seen ‘an innumerable company of horsemen marching in ranke towards the South’. There was ‘in the North a smoake and fire great way of, and drums very loud, and presently whist and quiet; they marcht over my

⁷²⁰ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 212; Moscherosch, *Visionum*, 227-8; Bromhall, *History*, 51.

⁷²¹ Oliver Heywood, *The Rev. Oliver Heywood, B. A., 1630-1702: His Autobiography, Diaries, Anecdote And Event Books*, 3 vols (Charleston, SC: Nabu Press, 2012), III, 98.

house, and shee thought they were red'.⁷²² Closer to his home turf in Husum, Peter Goldschmidt recorded how an army of blue-uniformed soldiers, speaking an unknown language, had been seen both along the High Dyke on the Heverstrom and at Ockholm further up the North Sea coast.⁷²³ He also related seeing, at the time of his father's death in 1679, a squadron of soldiers in the field behind the house and beside the mill. A clergyman accompanied by a young Goldschmidt went to investigate but found nothing, nor did anyone else in the village see them either.⁷²⁴ Johann Beer, a Protestant who lived in Upper Austria in his youth, recounted a similar incident. As a child during a midday singing lesson, his teacher saw a squadron of riders go through the gates of a neighbouring monastery but later discovered that no one else had seen them.⁷²⁵

Stories of spectral armies and battles did not fall within one category of supernatural experience but rather had multiple meanings depending on the place, time and (confessional) outlook of the authors and readers. Our understanding of such spirits is heavily influenced by contemporary interpretations of war ghosts as tied to sites of pollution or figures of contested memory involving remembering and forgetting. We must think beyond this if we are to fully comprehend what spirit battles and ghost soldiers meant to the early modern. We must consider how Providence was a factor in these narratives and how this was expressed in portents and warnings which encapsulated both the mindsets and reading of history of the learned and the popular. The role of the Devil as God's executioner should be appreciated. We should also realise that reports about certain spectral battles and armies were not necessarily tied to war but also to politics and great mortalities. Finally, although older tropes do continue in the record, we should be aware of how they were reframed to address contemporary fears.

The classical record was awash with portents warning of the oncome of great wars, the outcome of major battles and the fall of great men, a tradition and framework which was plundered by early modern writers, Catholic and Protestant, to narrate and justify their own depiction of a history guided by Providence. Lavater expressed this when he described how

⁷²² Ralph Josselin, *The Diary of Ralph Josselin, 1616–1683*, ed. A. Macfarlane (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 339.

⁷²³ Goldschmidt, *Höllischer Morpheus*, 318.

⁷²⁴ Goldschmidt, *Höllischer Morpheus*, 316–7.

⁷²⁵ Beer, *Sein Leben*, 106.

signs in the heavens, earth and nature appeared 'before the alterations and changes of kingdoms and in the time of warres, sedition, and other daungerous seasons'.⁷²⁶ He mentioned four types of signs warning of change. These were *Portentia*, which 'forsheweth some thing to come as when straunge bodies appere in the ayre, or blazing stares, or thunder in fayre weather'. They were natural events but with hidden meaning. The next were *Ostentia*, 'which sheweth some thing to come to effecte speedily'. The third were *Prodigia*, 'a thing which albeit it often chaunce by course of nature, yet notwithstanding it doth always betoken some euill thing'. The last were *Monstra*, things 'whiche hapneth against nature', most notably monstrous births. Though he admitted that they were often difficult to distinguish apart, their purpose was 'to tell before or giue warning of things to come'.⁷²⁷

Looking for signs in the world around one and comparing them with earlier precedents to understand what might happen next, was a feature of both the grander narrative of history and popular belief. Indeed, the textual or oral listing and cataloguing of events linked to signs and then recourse to their memory could be argued as one of the more practical applications of history. It was known from experience that when X happened, Y or Z was observed and that if this was the case in the past, then it could apply to the present too. What was important was the real or imagined connection of a portent to an event. One could potentially discern the future by looking into the past for precedents, where ghostly portents became memoria in effect. Patterns could also be sought in the recurrence of phenomena. The appearance of spirits was often understood as one sign, more dreadful and momentous than any other, that forebode change and/or death, either for the individual or for the wider society.

Early modern historians, chroniclers and writers dealing with spirits compiled long lists of events linked to supernatural signs and ghosts. Indeed, the epistemological approach of major writers on ghosts such as Lavater, Taillepied, Francisci, Glanvill, More and others, relied on collecting tales and making their case, scientifically, by weight and number, skewed in such a light to push their own perspective on the matter. This was particularly relevant in the late seventeenth century when refuting atheism overtook the demonisation of Catholicism as the major concern for most writers on ghosts. Belief in a Providential universe was validated by lists of events, many of which were presented as inexplicable by any causation other than of

⁷²⁶ Lavater, *Of Ghostes.*, 80-81.

⁷²⁷ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 8.

spirits. It reaffirmed the idea of a panoptic God, both loving yet disciplining, aware equally of the fall of the smallest sparrow and transgression of the pettiest sinner.

John Aubrey was the most prominent English antiquarian collector who had less of an ideological axe to grind and seemed more content in recording beliefs for their own sake.⁷²⁸ His *Miscellanies* were divided into chapters detailing subjects such as Day Fatality, Ostenta, Omens, Apparitions, Dreams and other subjects. Each contained many anecdotes or beliefs which clearly showed that people were aware of, and, sought signs in the world around them and precedents in the past to understand their own present. In ways, it was a pragmatic approach to history, from the recording of events and presentation of evidence to seeking causation and gist from this material while extrapolating its relevance for the present. Likewise, the importance of reading meaning into the world around one, to justify the flow of the past and discern the direction of the future, was evident in sources that dealt with popular culture whether they might be antiquarians involved in proto-ethnology or scathing rebukes by clerics or the learned of peasant superstition. Just as signs pointed to the fate of kingdoms and great men, so was the life of the individual enmeshed within a system of signs and portents, ranging from love to death.

Das Vorspiel deß Würg-Engels

Where the Rumpel-Geister walk and a war-cry is heard, then a great bloodbath is on hand... Then the Devils are glad, laughing and playing some time before, thereof, as if they wanted to say: we have there a certain game!⁷²⁹

The Devil, acting within the bounds set down by God, was often recognised as the driving force behind many of these signs. Michael Freud, a teacher and librarian in Wismar and Lübeck, described it thus:

All of this is only the Devil's work who reigns in the darkness of this world and he enjoys dwelling and scaring in the dark too, which

⁷²⁸ Bath and Newton, 'Sensible Proof', 9-10.

⁷²⁹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 210. 'Wo die Rumpel-Geister gehen / und ein Kriegs-Geschrey gehört wird; da ist grosses Blut-Vergiessen obhanden. Deß freuen sich die Teufel / lachen und spielen einige Zeit vorher / davon / als wollten sie sprechen: Wir haben da ein gewisses Spiel!'

generally happens in the places where great battles and defeats occurred.⁷³⁰

Francisci dedicated five chapters of his *Höllische Proteus* to war apparitions.⁷³¹ The Devil was a central figure throughout this text, hating and conspiring against God constantly but entirely subject to him as agent and instrument of his vengeance. He fulfilled the role of God's hangman or executioner.⁷³² One chapter of Francisci's work was titled 'The foreplay of the Angel of Death' and dedicated to war portents.⁷³³ Couching his language within theatrical metaphor, he depicted the Devil as a talented actor in a stage-play with a prelude and epilogue, all the time manipulating the weaknesses and fears of the audience.⁷³⁴ Portents were merely a taster of the death and destruction to come.

Wailing and the sound of lamentation were some of the signs of impending war and battle. Pliny wrote about the 'signs and wonders' that warned of war which included the 'miserable cries of men, clashing of swords and armour and neighing of horses'.⁷³⁵ Little had apparently changed fifteen centuries later. Before the Battle of Sievershausen in 1553, in which Maurice of Saxony (1521-1553) lost his life, it was claimed that shouts and cries were heard across the field.⁷³⁶ There could also be the sound of armies passing such as that which occurred at Riga in 1665 when noise resembling a great but invisible host of horses and carts was heard.⁷³⁷ Lavater commented on how 'Gunnes, launces and halberdes, with other kindes of weapons and artilerie so often times move of their own accors as they lie in the armorie'.⁷³⁸ Poltergeists in the armouries of Erfurt and Göttingen occurred just before the fall of those cities in the Thirty Years' War as well as the watch being thrown from the city walls according to Francisci.⁷³⁹ There was the story of the drum, reputed to have been made from the skin, at his own request, of the Hussite military genius, Jan Žižka (c. 1360-1424), which would beat a tattoo whenever a military or national misfortune threatened Bohemia.⁷⁴⁰ Portents could also

⁷³⁰ Freud, *Gewissens-Fragen*, 104. 'Diß alles ist nun deß Teuffels Werck/ der in der Finsternuß dieser Welt herrschet/ und also auch gern im Finstern grauset und hauset/ welches gemeiniglich an denen Orten geschicht/ da zuvor grosse Schlachten und Niederlagen geschehen'.

⁷³¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, chapters 23-27, 194-251.

⁷³² Thomas, *Religion*, 563.

⁷³³ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 223-45. 'Das Vorspiel deß Würg-Engels'.

⁷³⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 223.

⁷³⁵ Anon, *VVonder of VVonders*, 1-2.

⁷³⁶ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 225.

⁷³⁷ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 216-7.

⁷³⁸ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 80-1.

⁷³⁹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 225-6.

⁷⁴⁰ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 126-7.

take the form of apparitions as in the case of that seen near Gladismuir at Two Mile Cross by two merchants on the night of 4th November 1666. Crossing the moor, they encountered ‘four men in grey cloaths and blue bonnets standing round a dead corps, lying swaddled in a winding sheet’. It was understood as a portent of the Battle of Rullian Green that occurred nearby twenty days later.⁷⁴¹

Sky armies were one famous supernatural trope quite foreign to the modern reader as they were intimately connected to a world-view dominated by Providence and closely connected to classical and biblical precedents. Apparitions of armies, fleets and battles in the skies were tropes largely understood as portents of upcoming events rather than memories of earlier clashes. Nor did the change they portended necessarily involve war. Many are found in Francisci who cited them as examples of the Angel of Death’s and Devil’s foreplay.⁷⁴² Francisci recorded sky armies and battles on the 8th January 1675 over Berlin, on the 7th October 1677 over Bremen, 1679 in Schonen and Barseck, 1680 over Lübeck, between Hadersleben and Hamburg in 1684, Bahüs in Sweden in 1671 and Posen in 1673.⁷⁴³ Some of these included the sounds of battle and fighting. Other portents included a shower of bullets raining from the sun over Lübeck in 1677 and three ghostly figures over Rothwell in 1679.⁷⁴⁴

Meanwhile, an English text from 1661, *Mirabilis Annus, or the Year of Prodigies*, recorded sky armies and battles during the Italian wars of Charles VIII (1470-1498), in the Low Countries in 1588, in Linz and Silesia, in Pomerania in 1628, and Aschersleben in Saxony in 1631 during the Thirty Years War. The author noted how they were understood as the ‘forerunners of some bloody Fights, Skirmishes, or Sieges, at or near those places where they were first seen’. In England they were seen in 1640 just prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, when they ‘were looked upon as sad presages of the ensuing broils’, with another recorded in 1648 before the battle of Preston with ‘the appearance in the Heavens of a Southern and Northern Army in *Yorkshire*, and the Northern Armies being beaten by the other’.⁷⁴⁵ In 1628 in Berkshire, the

⁷⁴¹ Sinclair, *Satan’s Invisible World*, 123.

⁷⁴² Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 225-245.

⁷⁴³ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 218-22, 233.

⁷⁴⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 218-20.

⁷⁴⁵ Anon, *Eniaytos Terastios Mirabilis Annus, or, The Year of Prodigies and Wonders being a faithful and impartial Collection of severall Signs that have been seen in the Heavens, in the Earth, and in the Waters; Together with many remarkable Accidents, and Judgements befalling divers Persons, according as they have been testified by very credible Hands: All which have happened within the Space of one Year last past, and are now made publick for a seasonable Warning to the People of these three Kingdoms speedily to repent and turn to the Lord, whose Hand is lifted up amongst us* (London, 1661), 11-2.

sounds of artillery, the hissing of bullets and drumming were heard in the air, with one Mistress Greene recovering a metallic sample of this shot from the ground.⁷⁴⁶ Sightings of such armies in England were not restricted to the Civil wars and the immediate years leading up to them. Thomas Nashe, writing in the late sixteenth century, recorded how 'sundry times have we beheld whole armies of men skirmishing in the air'.⁷⁴⁷

The direction from whence ghostly and sky armies came was important. A pamphlet described a 'vvonderful blazing star with the dreadful apparition of two armies in the air' on the 17th December 1681, near Exeter. An army 'whose leader had a coronet on his head' approached from the north to confront an army from the south that eventually forced it to retire.⁷⁴⁸ In Germany, Peter Goldschmidt noted how on the morning of 9 July 1678, at 5 am, two spectral armies were seen, one marching from the north, along the Elbe and the other from the south which then clashed at Dannenberg, the engagement finishing with the apparition of a long, black coffin on the battlefield.⁷⁴⁹ Francisci made specific reference to ghostly armies and celestial events coming from the north in his records. The fire in the sky and fiery bullets visible from Lübeck in May 1680 started and ended in the north.⁷⁵⁰ The ghostly armies seen in the meadows outside a church in Uplande in 1655 approached from the midday and midnight sides of the building.⁷⁵¹ A sky fleet releasing fiery shot was seen approaching Danzig from the north just before the war between Sweden and Poland in Gustavus Adolphus' (1594-1632) time.⁷⁵² In 1629, fishermen in the territory of Wisingsburg saw clouds coming from the north which rained fire.⁷⁵³ The direction a ghostly army came from could be dictated by the geography of a place in relation to contemporary political realities and memory of past invasion. We have just mentioned the apparitions in Yorkshire prior to the 1648 battle of Preston between Cromwell and the Scots under Hamilton.⁷⁵⁴ Another example of this was the series of ghostly armies recorded in the *Gentleman's*

⁷⁴⁶ Thomas Dekker, *Looke vp and see VVonders A miraculous Apparition in the Ayre, lately seene in Barke-shire at Bawlkin Greene neere Hatford. April. 9th. 1628* (London, 1628), 12-15.

⁷⁴⁷ Nashe, *Unfortunate Traveller*, 217.

⁷⁴⁸ Anon, *The VVonderful Blazing Star with the Dreadful Apparition of two Armies in the Air. The one out of the North, the other out of the South, as in the Figure above is represented*. (London, 1681).

⁷⁴⁹ Goldschmidt, *Höllischer Morpheus*, 318-20.

⁷⁵⁰ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 220-1.

⁷⁵¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 227-8.

⁷⁵² Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 229.

⁷⁵³ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 230-1.

⁷⁵⁴ Anon, *Eniaytos Terastios Mirabilis Annus*, 12.

Magazine seen marching along Souther Fell in Cumberland on midsummer's eve in 1735, 1737 and again in 1745.⁷⁵⁵ They occurred just south of the border between England and Scotland, in an area with long memories as a frontier march and near the road any invading armies would take heading north or south. These armies were also reported at times of acute tension within Great Britain involving the Jacobite cause and wars with continental powers which culminated in Bonnie Prince Charlie's 'Rising' in 1745 and the invasion of England via nearby Carlisle. With relation to Germany and the Baltic, Sweden lay to the north. Though hailed as the saviour of a Protestant Germany in the Thirty Years War, the memory of their brutality and continued presence in Germany up until the end of the Great Northern War (1700-1721) made them outlive their initial welcome. Orthodox Russia also lay to the north of much of Europe if one considers the sea routes taken to travel there.

However, the north had more sinister connotations as it was traditionally associated with the Devil.⁷⁵⁶ The north side of the churchyard was where sinners were often interred and those whose behaviour in other parishes might merit their total exclusion.⁷⁵⁷ The Bible also warned of armies from the north. Jeremiah warned repeatedly of 'a great commotion out of the north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a den of dragons'.⁷⁵⁸ Joel 2. 20 promised that God would protect Israel from a northern army. Ezekiel 38. 15 spoke of how a mighty army of Gog would 'come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses'. Most famously, Daniel 11 predicted a war between the King of the North and King of the South which was a sign of the end times. The King of the North had its roots in the geography and power politics of the Fertile Crescent and the tribulations Israel suffered under waves of successive invaders that included the Assyrians and Babylonians. The Bible, particularly Daniel and Revelation, described the signs one could read, not only to understand the past but also the future. The end would be marked by wars, invasions and great mortalities. One should be conscious of this paradigm applied to sky or ghostly armies, particularly when specific reference was made to the polar directions from whence they came. It is even more relevant if used to describe a ghostly army unconnected with a physical site of memory, either prior to or consequent to a battle. Not only did it act as

⁷⁵⁵ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 17 (Nov. 1747), 524.

⁷⁵⁶ J.B. Russell, *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 69-71, 139.

⁷⁵⁷ S. Tarlow, *Ritual, Belief and the Dead in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 184.

⁷⁵⁸ Jeremiah 10. 22; See also Jeremiah 6. 1, Jeremiah 1. 14, Jeremiah 4. 6, Jeremiah 50. 3.

a portent of war, but it clearly set that portent within a biblical paradigm of history, most significantly that of the immediate end times. It could also place political rivals on the side of good and evil respectively.

At a national level, Vladimir Jankovic noted how print reports of sky battles lent themselves to contemporary partisan politics as ‘calculated symbols of improbability that challenged the “normalness” of general providence and the social status on which it reproduced’.⁷⁵⁹ Focusing chiefly on the aerial apparitions seen in the aftermath of the 1715 Jacobite rising, popularly called ‘Lord Derwentwater’s Lights’ after a leader of the rebellion, he claimed they were ‘a vehicle of polemical engagement and a tool for destabilising the Whig political universe’. They played on popular grievances and disaffection with the Hanoverian succession, using traditional preternatural tropes which exaggerated the stereotypical unpredictability and irrationality of the lower orders.⁷⁶⁰ Jankovic’s interpretation has many merits. The dissemination of such stories would have spread discontent and potential panic, recalling the chaos that happened when similar apparitions had been seen in the past. Political factions could have exploited these rumours to exert pressure on the authorities which in turn would have influenced domestic policy.

We have also already encountered ghostly funeral processions and lights which proceeded towards the churchyard and were understood as a portent of death for a person, lord or locality. Sometimes we encounter the same trope in cheap print but transposed to the sky and heralding a much greater mortality or war. An Augsburg broadsheet for 1561 recorded how people in Emskirchen saw two black covered biers with mourners in the sky and grave holes appearing around them.⁷⁶¹ A Strasbourg pamphlet noted how in November 1574, the people of Elzach saw three great apparitions in the sky, one of which was a bier being carried by four men.⁷⁶² Here we can see folkloric spectral motifs pressed into a wider Providential, and potentially political narrative.

⁷⁵⁹ V. Jankovic, ‘The Politics of Sky Battles in Early Hanoverian Britain’, *Journal of British Studies*, 41:4 (2002), 458.

⁷⁶⁰ Jankovic, ‘Politics’, 456-8.

⁷⁶¹ Anon, *Ein Erschröcklich Gesicht so zu Embßkirchen auff Erichstag den Vierdten Tag Marcij bey Nacht an dem Hymel gesehen worden* (Augsburg, 1561).

⁷⁶² Anon, *Wunderbare schreckliche Neue Zeitunge Von dreien mercklichen Himelszeichen* (Strasbourg, 1574).

Sites of Memory and Pollution

There was a long tradition of battlefields being associated with ghostly activity. For early modern authors, the battlefield of Marathon was the most frequently cited classical example. Lavater described how '400 yeres after the battaile there foughten, there was hard the neying of horses, and the incountring of souldiours as it were fighting every night'.⁷⁶³ Erasmus Francisci recalled the memory of the site of the battle of Marchfeld (1278) where following the battle, at midnight, 'much rattling, tumult, roars and the clashing of weapons were heard' and among the 'great host of spirits' which appeared were seen many 'in the shape of known people'.⁷⁶⁴ Similarly, following the battles of Nördlingen (1634, 1645), for 'many years later at night in that same area a field game of drilling, drumming and firing pieces was heard'.⁷⁶⁵ The site of the battle of Edgehill (1642) was also reported by the inhabitants of nearby Kineton to have witnessed marching spectral armies and a refight of the original battle in the winter of 1642.⁷⁶⁶ 'The dolfull and the hydious groanes of dying men were heard crying revenge' alongside 'the noyse of drummes and trumpets' which was followed the next night by the apparition of the spectral battle itself, as 'all the spirit horse and foot appeared and stood in battleray', with the firing of carbines and the 'Ordinance playing on against the other, as plainly visable to the behoulers view as if the reall action had bin there'.⁷⁶⁷ The Pakosch battlefield (the battle of Klecko fought on May 7, 1656,) was reputed to be haunted. A gentleman related in September 1666 how just a few days earlier he had been on the field itself and had heard ghostly drumming, shouting and the sounds of battle.⁷⁶⁸ Likewise, the location of the battle of White Mountain (1620) outside Prague was haunted by fiery riders.⁷⁶⁹

⁷⁶³ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 54; Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 250.

⁷⁶⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 250-51. 'mancherley Gerassel / Tumult / Getöß / und Waffen-Klang / gehört' and among the 'grosse Schaar von Geistern' which appeared was seen 'viel Gespenster...in Gestalt mancher bekandter Leute'.

⁷⁶⁵ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 251. 'viel Jahre hernach / zu Nachts / in selbiger Gegend / ein Feld-Spiel von Pauken / Trummeln / und knallenden Stücken / vernommen'.

⁷⁶⁶ Anon, *The New Yeares Wonder Being a most certaine and true Relation of the disturbed Inhabitants of Kenton* (London, 1643).

⁷⁶⁷ Anon, *New Yeares Wonder*, 6-7.

⁷⁶⁸ Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 394-5.

⁷⁶⁹ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 137.

The site of another Protestant defeat at Stadtlohn (1623), where over six thousand were killed by the Catholic League, was haunted long after by spirits.⁷⁷⁰

Francisci dedicated a chapter to post-battle apparitions in his *Höllische Proteus* entitled 'the re-enactment of the Angel of Death'.⁷⁷¹ Exploiting a military metaphor, he compared how the pagan Romans had a triumph only once after a victory, unlike the Devil who exhibited his victory, again and again, years after the event. The place where these spirits gathered was both a *Tummelplatz* and *Trommelplatz*, a stomping patch and parade ground for the devil. He noted how the 'roars and noises which usually are heard afterwards at such places where a skirmish or bloody encounter happened' was 'a sign that he celebrated such bloody works and as it were, boasted as master, contriver and braggart of the same'.⁷⁷² Francisci noted how one such spectral replay on the site of the battle of Nördlingen could be attributed to the Devil celebrating a divided Christendom busy slaughtering itself.⁷⁷³

From a classical perspective, the scale and violence of the bloodshed alongside issues surrounding the interment of many corpses in these locations were the reasons for such apparitions. Indeed, the Edgehill spectres were attributed by 'some learned men' to the possibility 'that there may be yet vnburied kackasses found' on the field from the original battle and that following a 'so diligent search' which 'found it so', the assumption was that the apparitions would cease.⁷⁷⁴ Aubrey recounted the dream a Mr Smith had in which he was told that he would soon see the bones of those who fell in the ancient battle of Colemore between Vortigern and Hengest. Shortly afterwards, he saw many bones unearthed at a place called Blackmore.⁷⁷⁵ Dying young with their time cut short, in full vigour of life, with blood on many of their hands, soldiers were then often not granted the very burial rites deemed necessary in traditional societies to negotiate the journey to the afterlife. The lucky ones were

⁷⁷⁰ P.H. Wilson, 'Atrocities in the Thirty Years War', in M. O'Siochrú and J. Ohlmeyer (eds), *Ireland: 1641 Contexts and Reactions* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 164.

⁷⁷¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 249-51. 'Das Nach-Spiel deß Würg-Engels'

⁷⁷² Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 249. 'Getöß / und Lärmen / so er gemeinlich/ an solchen Oertern/ da ein Scharmützel/ oder blutiges Treffen/ vorgegangen / nachmals hören lässt' was 'eine Anzeigung/daß er/ über solche geschene Blut-Händel/ jubilire /und sich gleichsam einen Meister/Erfinder und Angeber derselben / rühme'.

⁷⁷³ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 251. 'als eine Jubel-Freude deß Menschen-Feindes / über das Blut der Menschen / und über die Blut-Bäder der zerrissenen Christenheit'.

⁷⁷⁴ Anon, *New Yeares Wonder*, 8.

⁷⁷⁵ Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 153-4.

buried with some form of service or remembered afterwards in memorials.⁷⁷⁶ For the unlucky ones, on the other hand, their bodies which had already suffered the indignities of violent death and looting were left to rot and disintegrate on the battlefields or were subject to a hasty burial without the appropriate rites.

The famous poltergeist at Mâcon in 1612 which tormented the house of its Calvinist minister, François Perreaud (1572/7-1657), made several claims about its identity. One of them was that it had fallen off a scaling ladder into the moat and croaked like a frog when Geneva was being attacked by the forces of Savoy.⁷⁷⁷ This potentially indicated that it had been the spirit of a soldier who died in this siege and was left to rot in the surrounding ditch. Even if there was a grave, there was the risk that the site itself might be desecrated, the markers removed or abused by the locals and the remains subject to further indignities as observed by Drew Gilpin Faust in her study of the dead of the American Civil War.⁷⁷⁸ A story by Graben zum Stein recounted how the skull of a soldier, killed three years previously on a battlefield and exposed to the elements, was brought back to a house and promptly began to create trouble for its occupants.⁷⁷⁹ A conversion parable by the same author focused on supernatural encounters a sinful and sceptical officer had on a field where six months prior, a bloody battle had occurred. Ignoring propriety, he went hunting, only to encounter a nest of human bones and rotting flesh that hoopoe birds had constructed for themselves from the fallen which then set off a chain of visions of spirits and the dead.⁷⁸⁰

The looting of corpses after a battle was not only restricted to items of value the fallen had been carrying. Heads and other corpse parts could be taken as trophies as happened to the thousands of Turkish corpses after the siege of Belgrade (1717).⁷⁸¹ In classical sources frequently cited by early moderns, most notably that of the tale of Erichtho, witches prowled battlefields in search of components for their spells or to interact with the spirits of the freshly slain.⁷⁸² Agrippa von Nettesheim noted how old battlefields were ideal for contacting the

⁷⁷⁶ Samuel Lentz, *Anweisung zu einer Chronicke der Alt-Märckischen Haupt-Stadt Stendal, so viel sich davon in gedruckten und ungedruckten Schrifftten gefunden hat Bd. 2: Fortgesetzte Anweisung zu einer Stendalschen Chronik, betr. die Kirchen- und Reformations-Historien ders. Stadt* (Halle, 1748), 68.

⁷⁷⁷ Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World*, 128.

⁷⁷⁸ D.G. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 222-3.

⁷⁷⁹ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 18-20.

⁷⁸⁰ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 234-6.

⁷⁸¹ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 232.

⁷⁸² Ogden, *Magic*, 123, 193-7.

spirit world as necromancy ‘worketh all its experiments by the carkases of the slain, and their bones and members, and what is from them, because there is in these things a spirituall power friendly to them’.⁷⁸³ Corpse magic was tightly integrated into early modern witchcraft narratives as well as popular magical cures and charms. Battlefields also offered a ready supply of cadavers for dissection for the burgeoning field of medical science which depended in peacetime more on the bodies of criminals or those scavenged by Resurrectionists. Of course, there was an innate wish for the body to remain united after death and for it to receive a proper burial. The popular understanding of the resurrection on the last day and the importance of the physical remains in this process largely overrode learned objections. It was a desire affirmed in stories of angry ghosts that sought to be reunited with their body parts while punishing the thief responsible.

Daniel Defoe, mocking attitudes regarding the necessity for a proper burial, inadvertently exposed the inconsistencies between popular belief and theological consistency on the matter. The absurdity in his eyes was that anyone could imagine that ‘the Souls of those poor creatures who were killed in the Wars, and were left unburied in Heaps in the Field’, or had ‘only a pile of Stones thrown upon them, as was often the Case, are wandering still, and neither admitted into Heaven or Hell’.⁷⁸⁴ A traditional request made by a ghost was for its remains to be given a decent burial. Lavater mentioned how

the ghostes of them which wer not orderly buried, or whose accustomed rites and ceremonies in the time of warres were omitted, dyd appeare eyther to their friendes or vnto others, complaining & intreating that their funerals, & all other ceremonies mighte be obserued for their sake.⁷⁸⁵

An example of this was found in the tale recorded by Praetorius of a ghost that appeared on the site of the battle of Pakosch (1656) to a Polish servant. The spirit appeared on a white horse wearing only a white shirt and claimed to be Bulkonyk Skop, a Cossack colonel. It demanded the servant seek out his body, which still lay on the field in the mire, and secure proper burial for it. Otherwise, he would not permit any others to pass the field and as proof of his intent, slapped the underling leaving a spectral handprint on his cheeks. The servant

⁷⁸³ Agrippa von Nettesheim, *Three Books*, 489-90.

⁷⁸⁴ Moreton, *Secrets*, 176.

⁷⁸⁵ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 188.

performed his task and found a body dressed in a green silk coat though the face and fingers were badly hewn and unrecognisable.⁷⁸⁶

Corpses lying in the open, exposed to the elements, would also swell up and blacken as recorded by Drew Gilpin Faust in the American Civil War.⁷⁸⁷ They were noxious and would spread disease unless properly disposed of. Though I have not encountered any physical revenants or ghouls prowling early modern German or English battlefields in the record, it is interesting to note that revenants were often described in the same terms. The process of decomposition, normally hidden in the grave, was exposed to public view only for those who were outcasts of a society such as criminals, strangers and in this case, soldiers.

More rationalist approaches to the sighting of ghosts on battlefields, and also churchyards, cited a link between the vapours from their decomposing bodies and the apparitions that hovered over them. The physician and philosopher Richard Burthogge (1637/8-1705) recorded one view, though 'this Opinion has very little ground', how they 'frame unto themselves the Vehicles in which they appear, out of the Moisture of their own deserted Bodies'. The fact that the ancients cremated their dead, rather than buried them, was a reason why fewer ghosts, dependent on the moisture of the body, were seen then.⁷⁸⁸

Lights were also often associated with places of slaughter. Various theories regarding their provenance were suggested, from being souls of the deceased or the devil's mimicry to the astral spirit within the Paracelsian model or merely the product of gases during the process of decomposition. Otto von Graben zum Stein mentioned how lights seen on a hill at Meinhardsberge were interpreted by the locals as due either to a murder or possibly a past skirmish.⁷⁸⁹ He also noted how battlefields along the Turkish-Austrian border were often haunted by lights and that horses would not cross them.⁷⁹⁰ Erasmus Francisci recorded how one of his Catholic servants thought the lights he encountered in the countryside one night might be the soul of a soldier slain in a skirmish.⁷⁹¹ The idea that these were souls undergoing their own Purgatories of place has already been mentioned in the previous chapter.

⁷⁸⁶ Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 394-5.

⁷⁸⁷ Faust, *Republic*, 57.

⁷⁸⁸ Richard Burthogge, *An Essay upon Reason, and the Nature of Spirits by Richard Burthogge* (London, 1694), 225-6.

⁷⁸⁹ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 179-180.

⁷⁹⁰ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 64.

⁷⁹¹ Francisci, *Wunder-reiche Uberzug unserer Nider-Welt*, 552.

In war, people died young, people died violently, their lives cut drastically short of the three score years and ten deemed natural in the Bible. Their killing was a sinful act performed by sinful men. They died most usually without the chance to repent their sins, whether as perpetrators or victims. The justness of the cause they had fought for and their reasons for enlisting might not have been so noble. They died far from their families, with no kin to comfort them in their physical and emotional distress. They had no chance to say a final farewell and smooth the transition of inheritance, if any, or observe in their passing signs that might determine their salvation or damnation. The manner of their death was possibly a vindication of the life they had led. Atheists were often portrayed as dying particularly badly. Indeed, the fate of their loved ones, whether they still lived or had been long dead was one difficult to ascertain precisely. War was the epitome of a bad death and most often the exact opposite of a scripted Christian good death as found in both the Catholic and Protestant *ars moriendi* tradition.

Heonik Kwon, in his study on war ghosts in Vietnam, concluded that 'the misery of being a ghost is in fact all about not having a specified place to relate to; a place where their historical identities are remembered, and their grievances consoled'.⁷⁹² He cited the example of how bad death in Madagascar was perceived as happening at the wrong place, away from the ancestral shrine so making it difficult for the soul of the dead to return there. Instead, it would be forever excluded.⁷⁹³ Playing on Simmel's theory of the stranger, he stated that such spirits were not true spirits of the community who were the local ancestors but were rather interlopers.⁷⁹⁴ He attempted to clarify this by stating that 'they were not a categorical opposite to ancestors but rather constituted a crowd of ancestors uprooted and displaced from their homes'.⁷⁹⁵ Unless the soldier was a member of a permanent, local garrison, and often even then, he was a transient and stranger. His loyalty and identity were not to local kin and authority networks but to his paymasters and unit. He was an outsider passing through, an armed man under the control of other armed men or a renegade. In either case, he was a potential predator upon a community.

⁷⁹² Kwon, *Ghosts*, 152.

⁷⁹³ Kwon, *Ghosts*, 89.

⁷⁹⁴ Kwon, *Ghosts*, 19-23.

⁷⁹⁵ H. Kwon, 'The Ghosts of War and the Spirit of Cosmopolitanism', *History of Religions*, 48:1 (2008), 31.

A further reason for the ill-favoured status of military ghosts was that they were often the spirits of the defeated. The dead on the victor's side in a local engagement were more likely to be afforded an honourable burial as they retained the field. One could also posit that victory in the wider war also determined the status of the dead as the narrative was the victor's prerogative. In a study of apparitions in the Hudson Valley, Judith Richardson observed that 'while victors and heroes may come back as "spirits", it is the defeated who most often appear as ghosts, their very ghostliness attesting to the victory of their adversaries'.⁷⁹⁶ Furthermore, she noted that the burial spot of enemies became uncanny spots.⁷⁹⁷ Kwon found the difficulties of reconciling the memory of the dead who fought on opposing sides in Vietnam exposed the conflict at a local level of honourable ancestors who died as heroes for the victorious state and those who could not be commemorated publicly as they had fought on the losing side. The latter were relegated 'to the political status of ghosts'.⁷⁹⁸

In attempting to apply similar observations for England and Germany during our period in question, we are at an immediate disadvantage due to the differences in the amount, genre and local context and depth provided by the source material available to the anthropologist and contemporary folklorist as opposed to that available to the early modernist. However, certain similarities are evident. We have noted how contemporary authors closely linked sites of slaughter with places where apparitions occurred through the memory of evil deeds and continued presence of the dead. We have noted the importance rites of passage surrounding death were accorded in popular conceptions of the afterlife despite its variance at times with hotter Protestant thinking. Burial rights and rites were synonymous with community membership and affirmed the new status of both the dead and the heirs of the deceased. This was in stark contrast to what a soldier, perhaps the ultimate transient figure of the early modern age could expect upon death far from home. Treasure was also a vital element in many ghost stories and the pillaging, looting and sacrilege associated with roaming bands of soldiers provided another ingredient in this narrative. Dangerous already in life, some were potentially as dangerous in death. Such ghosts were a constant reminder embedded and

⁷⁹⁶ Richardson, *Possessions*, 150.

⁷⁹⁷ Richardson, *Possessions*, 152.

⁷⁹⁸ Kwon, 'Ghosts of War', 38.

encountered in the local landscape and in texts of the threats that outsiders and soldiers posed.

Roaming Army Spirits

The encounter with hosts of spirits in the countryside is one that frequently occurred in medieval and early modern literary texts. It was more recurrent in early modern German sources rather than English texts. Several questions hang over these armies, the one of interest here being the degree to which these spirit hosts were primarily ghosts of war. Processions across the landscape were not the preserve of armies of ghostly warriors alone. Spectral monks were also known to cross the landscape. A troop of them were ferried across the Rhine and another two groups of black and white clad monks were seen processing through the countryside near Königsberg in Prussia.⁷⁹⁹

Firstly, it is necessary to address the Purgatorial trope of spectral armies journeying across the countryside at night. It was one still frequently mentioned in early modern sources, both Catholic and Protestant, though from the sources I studied, it was a memory of a trope which still served a useful purpose in expounding (and denouncing) Purgatorial theory and praxis, rather than an actual encounter as the medieval tales claimed. That is not to say that these memorates no longer existed in Catholic areas at a folkloric level. Only that I found no evidence for claimed encounters with it in print for the period.

Purgatory was a defining element present in Catholic ghost stories set in war. Such tropes revolved around three elements: the sins committed in life, the current punishment and the amends necessary to atone for the former. Most often, the spirit would be undergoing punishment to purge himself of the sins he had committed as a soldier and had failed to confess or make amends for. That could often occur in the place of his sin during the night. In one medieval story, the ghost of a soldier who had been in the army of Richard against French king Philippe was condemned to wander until the day of Judgement for the sins he had committed in war.⁸⁰⁰ Another was a tale of how a Catholic soldier had made provision at his

⁷⁹⁹ Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 392-3.

⁸⁰⁰ Del Rio, *Denckwürdige Historien*, 21-22.

death for his horse to be sold and the proceeds of that sale to be given to the poor. A greedy relative ignored his request and was subsequently visited by his kinsman's ghost who berated him for his failure to fulfil his wishes. This had resulted in an unwarranted stay in Purgatory. However, now the soldier would go to heaven while the relative would go to hell.⁸⁰¹ Catholic ghosts were often caused by the failure to honour vows made during one's life. The intense stresses of war would have encouraged such promises made in extremis.

The trope of the Purgatorial army appeared in the late eleventh century. One such legend typical of the wider trope is that attributed to Peter the Venerable concerning Sancho, set in medieval Spain.⁸⁰² Another similar story was that attributed to Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516), the Benedictine abbot, historian and well-known occult writer, set not far from Worms in 1096/1098 and found more frequently in early modern German and English sources.⁸⁰³ A phantom army appeared, some on horse, some on foot, and would move around the countryside and back into the same mountain they had emerged from. Local monks came and asked the spirits who they were and were told that they were not evil spirits or troops of war but the souls of the dead who had fought for their prince and had been killed on that very field. They then said that prayers, alms, fasting and other repentance, especially Mass, could help hasten them through Purgatory. In Moscherosch's seventeenth-century version, the spirits admitted they were the souls of certain knights and soldiers who not long previously had been killed and were now being punished by the very weapons they had used in life to commit sin.⁸⁰⁴ The English writer Thomas Bromhall, in his 1658 version, emphasised that they were soldiers who had died in the service of the 'Prince of this World', a clear allusion to the Devil rather than their own earthly rulers.⁸⁰⁵

Both tales of Sancho and Worms focused on the plight of Purgatory spirits being punished for their sins during the hours of darkness as they traversed the earth. Their journeys mirrored the pilgrimages made by the living and the measures they recommended to ease their torments were the pious practices promoted by the Church. Schmitt maintains that in the later middle ages, these hosts lost their original relevance which was based in the political

⁸⁰¹ Stockhausen, *Mira*, 265-6; Bromhall, *History*, 61.

⁸⁰² Guazzo, *Compendium*, 71-3; Caussin, *Holy Court*, 429.

⁸⁰³ Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 54-5; Bromhall, *History*, 36. Praetorius sets the story in 1098, Bromhall in 1096.

⁸⁰⁴ Moscherosch, *Visionum*, 237.

⁸⁰⁵ Bromhall, *History*, 36.

and religious conditions of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. Instead, they were increasingly diabolised and lost their penitential character, hastened according to Schmitt by Purgatory assuming a more fixed status and location in the later middle ages.⁸⁰⁶ Even in the thirteenth century, there was a certain ambivalence towards the nature of what became known as Hellequin's army as expressed by William of Auvergne (c.1180-1249), the bishop of Paris, who understood it more as a demonic illusion.⁸⁰⁷ The leader of the army was more overtly identified with the devil, rather than Herla, Hellequin or Arthur.⁸⁰⁸ So too was the identity of those who followed in its train who became the damned rather than sinners who still had the potential to be saved. It is this trope we will consider now.

The *Wütende Heer*, Hellequin's Host or Raging Army were some of the many different names attributed to this more devilish spirit host documented in medieval and early modern sources across northern Europe. Tropes associated with it included roaming the countryside at night, most usually in the period around Christmas. Those in its train were either demons or the damned. It may have had its roots in Odin's band of fighters, the *Einherjar*, reflecting a northern European spirit host tradition.⁸⁰⁹ The antiquity of the Wild Army and Hunt and its links to classical pagan deities were recognised in contemporary educated discourse. The Catholic commentator, Pierre Le Loyer (1550-1634) related how Hecate used dogs in her own hunts and compared these same hounds to those of 'Arthur's Chace, which many do beleue to be in France, saying; That it is a Kenel of blacke Dogges followed by unknowne Hunstmen, with an exceeding great sound of Hornes, as if it were a very hunting of some wilde beast'.⁸¹⁰ Francisci wrote that the heathens imagined their gods, Apollo, Diana and Hercules charging through the wilds and Praetorius likewise described how 'at Christmas, Diana would travel around with her Furious Army'.⁸¹¹ Mention was made of how Frau Holla/ Holda, a composite pagan supernatural entity combining elements of classical and Germanic deities would roam at Christmastime.⁸¹²

⁸⁰⁶ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 99-100, 115, 119-120.

⁸⁰⁷ Caciola, *Afterlives*, 197.

⁸⁰⁸ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 119.

⁸⁰⁹ Caciola, *Afterlives*, 16; H.R. Ellis, 'Scandinavian Folklore in Britain', *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, 7: 2/3 (1970), 183-4.

⁸¹⁰ Le Loyer, *Treatise*, 11.

⁸¹¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 548; Johannes Praetorius, *Saturnalia: Das ist Eine Compagnie Weihnachts-Fratzen Oder Centner-Lügen und possierliche Positiones / Zusammen gelegt und auch Wiederleget Von Johanne Praetorio* (Leipzig, 1663), 395.

⁸¹² Praetorius, *Saturnalia*, 403.

In England, we have a report for the year 1127-28 describing a Wild Hunt near Peterborough as well as the medieval writer Walter Map's (1140-c.1210) story of King Herla and his train set along the Welsh borderlands.⁸¹³ Oliver Heywood also recorded a similar phenomenon. In the winter of 1664/5, strange noises were heard in the skies 'as if a great number of whelps were barking and howling'. It was called Gabriel-Ratches by his parishioners and believed to bring death to those who saw it and signalled 'a great death or dearth'.⁸¹⁴ The spectral armies seen at Souther Fell in 1735, 1737 and again in 1745 may have been fashioned using elements of this spectral trope. They occurred on the same mountain and on Midsummer's Eve each time they were witnessed. Though described as 'distinct bodies of troops', the impression reported by witnesses 'seemed more regardless of discipline, and rather had the appearance of people riding from a market, than an army'. The 1745 apparition was 'not conducted with the usual regularity as the preceding ones, having the likeness of carriages interspersed'.⁸¹⁵ Midsummer's Eve was a liminal time, one when bonfires were lit to signal a period in the agricultural cycle when crops were most vulnerable to summer blights and insect infestations.⁸¹⁶ It was a time when portents were sought for the future regarding who would die in the year ahead and who one might marry.⁸¹⁷ The sighting of a ghostly army on this date may have raised anxieties not only of war but crop failure, famine and death too.

In early modern German sources, the *Wütende Heer* was most frequently associated with modern day Thuringia and southern Saxony-Anhalt. Though it could range across the countryside and was reported from different regions of Germany, it was most often placed as occurring between Mansfeld and Eisleben. The procession was led by an old man with a white wand called the Loyal Eckard with apparitions of the recently dead and those soon to die from the area following in his wake.⁸¹⁸ The writer, Michael Freud, also recounts the story of a headless rider and the sounds of dogs barking, 'as if it were a great hunt' near Naumberg.⁸¹⁹ The most definitive account was written by Johannes Praetorius in 1668.⁸²⁰ He located the

⁸¹³ Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 75-6; 87-89.

⁸¹⁴ Heywood, *Autobiography*, III, 91.

⁸¹⁵ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 17 (Nov. 1747), 524.

⁸¹⁶ R. Hutton, *The Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 320-1.

⁸¹⁷ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 26, 97; Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 211-15.

⁸¹⁸ Freud, *Gewissens-Fragen*, 102.

⁸¹⁹ Freud, *Gewissens-Fragen*, 104. 'als wann ein grosse Jagt wäre'.

⁸²⁰ Praetorius, *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung*, 14-16.

legend in Thuringia around the liminal Christmas and Fastnacht period and mentioned how it was seen not only in the fields but also in the towns and villages. In keeping with mid-seventeenth century concepts of an army, these spirits would be seen 'sometimes as a squadron of riders, sometimes as a group of musketeers who would march backwards and forwards'.⁸²¹ In this '*Teufels Heer*' or 'Devil's Army', marched an array of spectres, some with their heads hewn, some without hands or limbs or with those extremities resting on their shoulders and even some with faces in their breasts in a nod to Pliny. With hares racing alongside them, one would hear the 'hunter's cries and blowing of horns and barking of dogs' and the 'grunting of swine and roaring of lions'.⁸²² The army itself would emerge from the Hörselberg or Venusberg. The author then admitted that this army was seen not only in Thuringia but also in Mansfeld near the Harzwald and further afield in Franconia and Swabia and even in other places.⁸²³ Later in the same text, Praetorius claimed that these were not fables but had their roots in local beliefs which could be corroborated by the testimony of an aged pastor from Mansfeld, Johann Kennerer.⁸²⁴

It is worth comparing elements of the medieval tale by the English Benedictine chronicler Orderic Vitalis (1075-1142), detailing the encounter Walchelin, a priest in the diocese of Lisieux in France, had with the Furious Army on the night of 1st January 1091 with that of Praetorius.⁸²⁵ Vitalis' story was perhaps the most famous medieval tale of Herlequin's Host which he constructed within a Purgatorial army paradigm. In it, the priest Walchelin stumbled across the progress of a great band of people, many of whom he recognised from his parish as having recently died. Led by a giant, the spectres of both rich and poor passed by, their various punishments commensurate with the different sins they had committed in life. Though their sins were grave, it was not clear if all were damned as Walchelin's brother, who was part of the host, admitted that their own father had been released from his torments at the time of Walchelin's ordination and that he hoped too to be freed a year on Palm Sunday. The procession was indeed monstrous, led by a giant with dwarfs and Ethiopians in tow but

⁸²¹ Praetorius, *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung*, 14. 'bißweilen wie eine Schwatrone Reuter / bißweilen wie ein Tron Mußquetirer sich erzeigen / indem sie also hin und wieder streiffen und marchiren'.

⁸²² Praetorius, *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung*, 15. 'Jäger-Geschrey / und Hörner blasen / Gebelle der Hunde' and 'gruntzen Schweine drunter und brüllen Löwen'.

⁸²³ Praetorius, *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung*, 16.

⁸²⁴ Praetorius, *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung*, 26.

⁸²⁵ Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories*, 66-73.

ultimately it was not a march of the damned as some from within its ranks would soon secure their release. This was in stark contrast to how Praetorius interpreted the *Wütende Heer*. It was not an army of the dead but rather ‘a considerable host of spirits, deceits and Devil’s jugglery’, an illusion conjured up by ‘the wicked Spirit which cannot stand the truth and can take any shape and can also sometimes dress as an Angel of Light’.⁸²⁶ In both tales, one was confronted with apparitions of the dead in all their grisly and gory detail. In Praetorius’ account, there was a link to the dead and the underworld with the Hörselberg/ Venusberg/ Seelenberg motif from which the spectres emerged. However, contemporary German Protestant learned belief clearly rejected the idea that they were souls undergoing Purgatory. Instead, it was clearly demonic. Even the hares that ran alongside the *Wütende Heer* were suggestive of witches. In another tale, the evil knight Rechenberg was approached by a spirit from this spectral host, who told him that ‘it was the Furious Army out of Hell’ and that he would join it within a year.⁸²⁷

However, aside from the name, there was little to suggest that the *Wütende Heer* was, in fact, a military trope in the way that Sancho’s tale or the phantom army of Worms were. For one, Francisci admitted that previously the *Wütende Heer* had been closely associated with the spirit troop of the Loyal Eckard but that presently it was more commonly associated with the broader motif of the Devil hunting the woods.⁸²⁸ The question of who was in the train of the *Wütende Heer* is also important. It was not only the apparitions of the souls of soldiers. Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg (1445-1510), the Swiss-born preacher and expert on demonology, writing in the early sixteenth century in his work, *Die Emeis* (1517), noted the composition of the host seen most often before Christmas. He stated that it included those who had died before their time and those who had killed themselves and that they had to run with the army until the time God had set for them had run out.⁸²⁹ Furthermore, the famous

⁸²⁶ Praetorius, *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung*, 14, 16. ‘eine ziemliche Menge Gespänster / Betrügñüssen und Teuffels Gauckeleyen’, an illusion conjured up by ‘der böse Geist / welcher in der Warheit nicht bestanden ist / allerhand Gestalt könne annehmen / und sich auch bißweilen in einen Engel des Liechts verkleiden’.

⁸²⁷ Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 55-7. ‘es sey der wütende Heer auß der Höller gewesen’; Lembach, *Historische Todes-Post*, 72-3; Waldschmidt, *Pythonissa Endorea*, 486.

⁸²⁸ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 526.

⁸²⁹ Johannes Geiler von Kayserberg, *Die Emeis: Dis ist das Buch von der Omeissen. vnnd auch. Her der Künig ich diene gern. Und sagē von Eigentschafft der Omeissen/ vnd gibt vnderweisung vō dē Vnholden vnd Hexen/ vnd von Gespenst der Geist, vnnd von dem Wütenden heer ... Vnd ist von dem hochgelerten Doctor Joānes Geiler vō Keisersperg Predicant der Keiserlichen freien Statt Straßburg/ der selben Zeit ... gepredigt worden* (Strasbourg, 1517), chpt. xxxviii.

account by Orderic Vitalis of Walchelin's vision of a spectral train, only the rear of which was held by an 'exercitus' or army of knights, was potentially more a reflection of 'the schema of the three orders, a complete social typology of crimes and punishments, on both sides of death'.⁸³⁰ Likewise, Praetorius noted that the composition of the host included the newly dead of the locality where it was seen and some who were still alive. There was no mention made of them being the apparition of the souls of soldiers.⁸³¹

Admittedly, the sighting or sound of this host was at times understood as a war portent. Christian Lehmann, the pastor and local chronicler of the Erzgebirge, recorded how during the Thirty Years' War, the cries of the hellish Hunter going 'Hu! Hu! Hu!' could be heard in the upland forests, signalling the approach of an enemy army.⁸³² Drew Gilpin Faust, in her study on the American Civil War, noted how 'for some men from rural areas, battle took on the character of the hunt, with its sense of sport and pleasure'.⁸³³ It would not be difficult to imagine the same occurring at times within early modern warfare though little specific evidence exists. However, it was clear that the Devil was depicted as behaving exactly like this in the wild as he chased after men's souls.

In conclusion, the *Wütende Heer* was more an army of the devil than anything else. It was a spectral trope that placed evil spirits on the edge of society at night, coursing through the wilds, or along the roads. It was not linked retrospectively to any specific battlefield nor was it a spectral replay of an event. It had long superseded Purgatorial armies in the early modern imagination, especially for Protestants. Like many supernatural phenomena, it could portend war though then so did many other signs. Likewise, it can be hard to identify or tie down definitively, as with so much of the supernatural where tropes are shared between entities. Christian Lehmann recorded the story of a tanner from Elterlein, who encountered a group of headless riders one night, a half mile from Grünhain, as he was walking home from Schwarzenberg.⁸³⁴ Was this a detachment of the *Wütende Heer* or was it an unrelated band of spirits? Were they fairies, tormented souls or demons abroad at night? This was the gap

⁸³⁰ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 97-99.

⁸³¹ Praetorius, *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung*, 14, 27.

⁸³² Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 77.

⁸³³ Faust, *Republic*, 38.

⁸³⁴ Lehmann, *Historischer Schauplatz*, 75.

left to the reader or listeners to decide what the unfortunate tanner had met, one with multiple interpretations.

Atrocity

The history of war has two narratives. One is of glory, of daring do, of the heroism of one's own faction and the perfidiousness of one's enemies which demanded and justified the violence and resources employed against them. The other is usually more personal, of the bloodletting, the gore of battle, of men ripped apart by iron and lead and of pointless death. A tale of vile deeds carried out in the heat of the moment or by mistake or even worse still, in full knowledge of the savagery and wickedness of what one was doing. Actions that would only damn one. Ghosts straddled both these narratives which dealt with atrocity.

The issue of conscience, memory and Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome in wartime has been extensively studied by Nigel C. Hunt.⁸³⁵ Ghosts as projections of conscience within the early modern theatre, particularly regarding apparitions in the works of Shakespeare, have also been one of the best known and most frequently researched aspects of renaissance studies involving spectres and thus there is no need to dwell on it here.

Sixteenth and seventeenth-century texts often emphasised melancholy as a factor why people mistakenly believed they had seen ghosts. At one level, it was understood as a black spirit of depression. It could also be interpreted as as a means enabling the Devil to manipulate the victim more easily, playing on his or her sadness and grief.⁸³⁶ Satan was often labelled as a 'melancholy spirit of grief'.⁸³⁷ Ludwig Lavater mentioned how many people saw ghosts due to 'melancholie, madnesse, weakness of the senses, fear or some other perturbation'.⁸³⁸ He described how men 'subject to feare through great dangers...imagineth strange things which in deede are not so'.⁸³⁹ Noel Taillepied wrote how those 'grieved at some mischance or loss...may easily imagine that extraordinary and dreadful things have happened

⁸³⁵ N.C. Hunt, *Memory, War and Trauma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁸³⁶ Taillepied, *Treatise*, 95.

⁸³⁷ Anon, *Vielförmige Hintzelmann*, 27. 'Ein Melancholischer Trauer=Geist'; Waldschmidt, *Pythonissa Endorea*, 617.

⁸³⁸ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 9.

⁸³⁹ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 14.

to them'.⁸⁴⁰ The severe psychological trauma inflicted by war would certainly have been a prompt for people to see ghosts. Coping with such intense stress would have encouraged forms of self-medication such as alcohol abuse or a wider lifestyle of dissipation which would then potentially have fed further into this grief and guilt-instigated cycle of spectre-seeing. Suicide would have been another form of escape. Francisci related the tale of a cavalier who plagued by melancholy killed himself and was subsequently seen as a headless horseman after his death.⁸⁴¹

Atrocity was part of war from the beginning, from the slaughters of the Old Testament to the conflicts of the Greek and Roman world. The tale of Pausanias (d. c.470 BC) was frequently encountered in early modern sources, of a war hero brought into disgrace and finally death by his own abuse of power while military governor of Byzantium. His lust for Cleonice inadvertently resulted in her death and he was afterwards relentlessly pursued by her spectre which demanded justice for the harm done.⁸⁴² John Aubrey attributed the insanity of Charles IX of France (1550-1574), who 'was wont to hear screaches, like those of the person massacred', to his role in the St. Bartholomew's Day bloodbath in Paris in 1572.⁸⁴³ Johann Beer recalled a memorate of a Matthaeus Frantz Kressling, a court and field trumpeter at Weissenfelß, who had, in a reflex spur of the moment action, mistakenly killed a farmer while on campaign in a forest in Hungary. Beer's source claimed that 'this trumpeter would often say to me, how this Hungarian farmer whom he had shot dead would come to him at night in his sleep and caused him much anguish and sleepless nights'.⁸⁴⁴

The English writer Daniel Defoe, writing in the early eighteenth century noted how 'conscience raises many a Devil that all the Magick in the World can't lay' and 'makes Ghosts walk, and departed Souls appear when the Souls themselves know nothing of it'.⁸⁴⁵ A bad conscience suggested a person uneasy with themselves by being aware of their own sin. For

⁸⁴⁰ Taillepié, *Treatise*, 12, 95.

⁸⁴¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 400.

⁸⁴² Münster, *Christlicher Vnderricht* (1601), 4.

⁸⁴³ Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 153.

⁸⁴⁴ Beer, *Sein Leben*, 110-111. 'Gleichwohl sagte mir dieser Trompetter öfters, wie ihn dieser von ihm todtgeschossene ungarische Bauer fast nächtlich in dem Schlauff vorkäme, und ihm viel Herzens Angst und Schlauff-lose Nächte verursachte'.

⁸⁴⁵ Daniel Defoe, *An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions. Being an Account of what they are, and what they are not; whence they come, and whence they come not. As also how we may distinguish between the Apparitions of Good and Evil Spirits, and how we ought to Behave to them. With a great Variety of Surprising and Diverting Examples, never Publish'd before.* (London, 1728), 100.

a Calvinist in particular, this would throw doubt upon their own Election and salvation. The tale of Colonel Bowen, a Parliamentary soldier in Ireland in the 1640s, was an example of this. His double, potentially a death portent but in this case here an indication of his damnation, appeared to his sister-in-law in Wales while he was in Ireland. He himself was a man accused of holding unconventional religious beliefs and general lax morality and was ‘haunted with ghastly Ghosts and Apparitions, which frequent him’.⁸⁴⁶ Once he ‘was famous for profession of Religion, but this Day is the saddest Man in his Principles I know living’ according to Baxter’s informant.⁸⁴⁷ The modern reader is tempted to read into this the conscience of a man scarred by the atrocities and trauma of a hard-fought campaign in 1640s Ireland as well as a cynicism of religious causes. Richard Baxter mentioned how he lived in Cork ‘in a beggarly way though he hath a fair Estate’, a sign perhaps of some mental weakness or trauma.⁸⁴⁸ He ‘immured himself in a small Castle with one Boy who said he oft rose in the Night and talked as if some were talking with him’.⁸⁴⁹ However, it is as likely that the haunted mind claimed for the colonel was the consequence, in the eyes of Baxter’s informant, of free-thinking, the unwarranted mockery of religion and an immoral lifestyle which induced either madness or divine punishment.⁸⁵⁰ The apparition of his double which then disappeared in a cloud of stinking vapour in a manner shared by the Devil only confirmed this.⁸⁵¹

English print accounts of the 1641 Irish Rebellion included the story of Sir Con MacGennis who slew in cold blood the Minister of Newry, a Mr Turge, ‘with divers other Protestants’. According to the text, MacGinnis was stalked by the good minister’s spectre, a circumstance that so frightened him that ‘with the apprehension of the said Mr. Turge his being continually in his presence, that he commanded his souldiers not to slay any more of them, but such at should be slain in battle’.⁸⁵² In this story, we detect two narratives. The first is of a man riddled by guilt for the evil deeds he had committed and pursued by the demons of conscience. The

⁸⁴⁶ Baxter, *Certainty*, 35.

⁸⁴⁷ Baxter, *Certainty*, 29.

⁸⁴⁸ Baxter, *Certainty*, 35.

⁸⁴⁹ Baxter, *Certainty*, 36.

⁸⁵⁰ Baxter, *Certainty*, 23-4.

⁸⁵¹ Baxter, *Certainty*, 25.

⁸⁵² Anon, *An Abstract of the Bloody Massacre in Ireland. Acted by the Instigation of the Jesuits, Priests, and Friars, who were chief Promoters of those Horrible Murthers; Prodigious Cruelties, Barbarous Villanies, and Inhumane Practices, executed by the Irish Papists upon the English Protestants, in the Year 1641. And intended to have been acted over again, on Sabbath Day, December the 9th 1688. But by the wonderful Providence of God was prevented.* (London, 1700), 23.

second is of divine vengeance on those who dare lay their hands on his ministers and thus the righteousness of one side and the perfidy of the other. It resembles other narratives depicting the tortured consciences of those who persecuted the godly. One peacetime example was that of Henry II of France (1519-59) who had a Protestant tailor burnt shortly after his accession. 'For many nights after', the terrified king 'confessed that he thought the shadow of the Tailor followed him whithersoever he went' and promised that 'he would never see nor hear any more of those Lutherans, though afterwards he brake his oath'.⁸⁵³ All these follow to some degree the observation made by Alexandra Walsham, how in English cheap print there was 'a growing tendency for providence to work internally through the malefactor's own conscience and for divine retribution to take the more intangible form of mental torment'.⁸⁵⁴

The relationship of atrocity to place and memory is also important with regards to ghosts. We have already examined at a local level how evil deeds were placed and remembered in the landscape and how ghosts were associated with sites of slaughter through memory and often the presence of the dead in those same locations. Place gained agency from the encounter one had there. Two of the most infamous atrocities whose memory was created and preserved in the early modern sources were those surrounding the sack of Magdeburg in 1631 and the Irish Rebellion of 1641. Both were textual accounts which exploited traditional tropes involving ghosts to appeal to a wider Protestant audience across Britain, Germany and indeed Europe and add to a grander confessional narrative of history.

The fall of Magdeburg to Count Tilly's (1559-1632) forces on 20 May 1631 was an iconic episode in the Thirty Years War, an event which shocked Protestant Germany and Europe. It was one whose memory persisted long after the dreadful siege had ended, and one whose legend was instrumental in the further development of confessional identity within Germany itself. The scholar Johann Vulpus, in his chronicle of the town, described the supernatural events that happened after the city's fall:

⁸⁵³ Samuel Clarke, *A Generall Martyrologie containing a Collection of all the greatest Persecutions which have befallen the Church of Christ from the Creation to our present Times, both in England and other Nations: whereunto are added two and twenty Lives of English modern Divines...: as also the life of the heroical Admiral of France slain in the partisan Massacre and of Joane Queen of Navar poisoned a little before / by Sa. Clarke.* (London, 1660), 321.

⁸⁵⁴ Walsham, *Providence*, 89.

A horrible cry could be heard in the sky over Magdeburg and the wailing would often be repeated: There was also a stone in the cathedral which lay in front of the choir that sweated blood. Likewise, on the Elbe, where the dead had been thrown in in their thousands, at night a great whining and mourning were to be heard.⁸⁵⁵

Classical motifs intermingled with biblical and folkloric tropes. The fate of Magdeburg was paralleled to that of Jerusalem, just as Protestantism was identified with the people of Israel. Both had been victims of Rome. The destruction each suffered was matched only by the supernatural prodigies that had heralded and followed the fall of both. Josephus' description of the fall of Jerusalem was already well known in early modern literature and frequently referred to in texts relating to ghosts and wonders.⁸⁵⁶ Its application to Magdeburg, a historic stronghold of the Reformation, helped build a wider Protestant narrative and identity.

The massacres at Portadown and Belturbet of Protestant settlers during the 1641 Irish Rebellion combined similar classical, traditional and Providential tropes. A pamphlet recorded how

the Ghost of divers of the Protestants which they had drowned at Portadown Bridge were daily seen to walk upon the River, sometimes the singing of Psalms, sometimes brandishing naked Swords, sometimes shrieking in a most hideous & fearful manner.⁸⁵⁷

In testimony attributed to a Katrine Cook, it was claimed that nine days after, in the very same place the massacre had occurred at Portadown Bridge, she saw the 'apparition of a Man bolt upright in the River, standing brest high, with his hands lifted up to Heaven'. The testimony of Elizabeth Price stated that in the place where their husbands and children had been slaughtered, she and others witnessed 'one like a Woman rise out of the River, brest high, her hair hanging down, which with her skin was as white as Snow, often crying out, Revenge, Revenge, Revenge, which so affrighted them, that they went their way.'⁸⁵⁸ These reports emphasised the innocence of the victims and consequently the guilt and wickedness of their assassins. They were martyrs, saints in heaven, whose apparitions accused the guilty and called for justice. Katrine Cook's vision 'continued in that Posture from December to the end

⁸⁵⁵ Vulpius, *Magnificentia Parthenopolitana*, 121. 'Ein jämmerlichs Geschrei in der Lufft über Magdeburg sich hören lassen/ und das Wehe/ Wehe/ offft wiederholet: auch ein Stein in dem Dohm vor dem Chor liegend Blut geschwitzet haben. Imgleichen an der Elbe/ da man die Todten bei viel 1000. Eingeworffen/ des Nachts ein grosses Winseln und Wehklagen gehöret worden seyn'.

⁸⁵⁶ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 83.

⁸⁵⁷ Anon, *Abstract*, 22-23.

⁸⁵⁸ Anon, *Abstract*, 22-3.

of Lent, at which time some of the English Army passing that way, saw it also, after which it vanished away'.⁸⁵⁹ Like spectres in the English murder ghost tradition, it was only when the call for justice was answered that the vision faded. The timing of this event within the liturgical year was interesting, starting around Christmas and ending as it did at Easter. Another noteworthy detail was the remark that so 'many of the Popish Irish which dwelt thereabouts, being affrighted therewith were forced to remove their Habitations further off into the Country' which would explain and have justified any land seized in a rebellion already prompted by dispossession.⁸⁶⁰ It would also have suggested empty lands, ready to be settled by new, more deserving owners.

The memory of 1641 was important in defining a Protestant identity in the British Isles. It warned of the ever-constant danger of the Other, namely the Irish natives and Catholics, and thus the need to stay vigilant and be ready to pre-empt any future such massacres they were only too capable of committing.⁸⁶¹ Stories of ghosts contributed to this legend by acting as a form of supernatural validation. The same was true for Magdeburg. These specific apparitions were not the demonic masquerade so recurrent in Protestant literature on purgatorial ghosts but were rather a sign of Providence and judgement upon the perpetrators of these wicked actions, and divine recognition of the sufferings of His people.

As with any ghost story, we often encounter a medley of tropes within one tale. Several meanings, not necessarily conflicting, can be read into the same text, just as any story is open to multiple interpretations once told. One notable instance of this is found in *Strange and Wonderful News from Exeter* which related the tale of a Mr Seley and the encounters he had on a journey to Taunton on 22nd September 1690. He left the inn on Black Down and met a farmer who offered him lodgings a mile or so back. However, the farmer led him to a place further than Mr Seley had intended to go and suddenly vanished. In his stead, 'Men, Women and Children, some like Judges, some like Magistrates, some like Clergy-men, and some like Country People' appeared, brandished spears and surrounded him, casting a net over him. His horse was fed a treacle by the apparitions before it fled or disappeared. Scripture failed to protect him when he recited it against his foes. For the rest of the night, from nine in the

⁸⁵⁹ Anon, *Abstract*, 22

⁸⁶⁰ Anon, *Abstract*, 22.

⁸⁶¹ Anon, *Abstract*, 2.

evening to four in the morning, he fended off and indeed wounded with his sword the spirits that assailed him as well as witnessing a procession of ten funerals and the apparitions of two corpses being dragged up close by him with their hair. He survived the night and fled home to report his ordeal to the authorities. The author noted that the place 'which is the same House where the supposed Farmer would have him go back to Lodge', belonged to 'one of Monmouth's Men' who was 'Hang'd on the Sign Post' and 'the Spot of Ground where Mr Seley was confin'd', was 'not far from the House where several of them were Buried that were Killed, and Executed on Monmouth's side, and goes by the name of Black Down'.⁸⁶²

At one level, we have a story whose authority was a Mr William Brown, a shoemaker next to a pub in Charing Cross, telling of a provincial heading off across the moors as night fell, sodden with alcohol, and losing his horse and his way in the process and then trying to explain his misfortunes with a fanciful tale. On the other, we have a play on fairy and spectral motifs located on the site of memory, appropriately named 'Black Down', of an episode in the ill-fated Monmouth rebellion (May-July 1685). Fairy tropes included the treacle fed to the horse, and Seley's apparent inability to break free from the general surroundings of his confinement until the morning.⁸⁶³ The multitude and breakdown of spirits by gender, class and occupation also suggest a parallel society of the dead, a standard component of fairy-lore.⁸⁶⁴ Indeed, this story has been classified as a fairy tale in Jennifer Westwood's and Jacqueline Simpson's survey of English folklore, *The Lore of the Land*.⁸⁶⁵ Richard Bovet had just six years earlier mentioned this exact area as being famous for its fairies which 'showed themselves in great Companies at divers times; at sometimes they would seem to dance, at other times to keep a great Fair or Market' and that 'the place near which they most ordinarily shewed themselves, was on the side of a Hill, named Black-Down, between the parishes of Pittminster, and Chestonford, not many miles from Tanton'. Bovet maintained that there had been a long-standing tradition of the hill being the site of a fairy fair, mentioning a witness from Comb St Martin who had seen them fifty years previously. Furthermore, he cited the reluctance of locals to interfere, stating that 'they durst not adventure in amongst them, for that every one

⁸⁶² Anon, *Strange and Wonderful News from Exeter giving an Account of the Dreadful Apparitions that was seen by Mr. Jacob Seley of Exeter on Monday, September the 22th, 1690, who gave the full account to the Judges the next day, who were going the Western Circuit*. (London, 1690).

⁸⁶³ Simpson and Westwood, *Lore*, 242-3, 367, 774; Thomas, *Religion*, 732.

⁸⁶⁴ D. Purkiss, *Troublesome Things: A History of Fairies and Fairy Stories* (London: Allen Lane, 2000), 77-8, 86-7.

⁸⁶⁵ Simpson and Westwood, *Lore*, 637-8, 777.

that had done so, had received great damage by it'.⁸⁶⁶ This paralleled Mr Seley's encounter with the apparitions of 'country people' who 'made at him' with spears and was a common theme in stories where the living intruded on companies of the dead, whether they were spectral masses or night time processions and rides across the landscape.

What is clear from the story is that these spirits, whether they were devils, fairies or ghosts, were recorded as appearing in the likeness of the dead and in a place of violent death caused by war and rebellion. They were also the recent dead as opposed to the ancient dead. The text about Mr Seley was printed at the end of a long summer of war in Ireland against James II (1633-1701), the very king the Monmouth rebellion and the locals of Black Down Hill had risen against at the start of his reign. It was a ghostly reminder of the excesses that had followed the suppression of the rebellion suggested by the spectral judges and images of imprisonment and punishment. That it occurred in a place already mentioned by Bovet, one year before the rebellion itself broke out, makes one wonder if it was merely a monster mash of fairy and ghost tropes in an already liminal place or if the site itself had been singled out by its long-standing notoriety as a place where some of the insurrection's victims were disposed of in 1685.

The Soldier, Morality and Disciplining

Albrecht Dürer's (1471-1528) famous engraving of *The Knight, Death and the Devil* (1513) captured the contradictions inherent in a soldier's existence. It can be read as a Christian knight, fearlessly passing through the valley of death, stalwart in his defiance of the temptations of the Devil and threat of death. Alternatively, it can be understood as representative of the destructive and evil forces that followed in the wake of the early modern soldier and for which he was infamous. They embodied the ambivalence felt towards the knight and soldier and how the ideal did not necessarily live up to the reality as laid out in texts such as Erasmus' *Enchiridion Militis*.⁸⁶⁷

⁸⁶⁶ Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 207-10.

⁸⁶⁷ Desiderius Erasmus, *A Booke called in Latyn Enchiridion Militis Christiani, and in Englysshe the Manuell of the Christen Knyght replenysshed with moste holsome Preceptes, made by the famous Clerke Erasmus of Roterdame, to the whiche is added a newe and meruaylous profytable Preface*. (London, 1533).

Furthermore, the struggle a Christian faced in his or her journey to salvation was wrapped in military motifs. A Christian was a soldier in the army of God, protected by His armour and fighting the good fight.⁸⁶⁸ Conversely, those who were not true Christians, who did not stand with Him, were foot soldiers in the army of the Enemy. A soldier was under a higher authority, subject to that discipline. A Christian too was subject to a code of discipline as laid out in Scripture. Just as a soldier needed discipline, so too did a Christian.

The ghost was a figure of such discipline. Regardless of confession, ghosts warned of the behaviour that would merit damnation and would act, particularly in Protestant thought, as instruments of that chastisement. Therefore, when we read ghost stories set in wartime, we should be aware that not only did it reflect the struggles and issues that faced the protagonists under those unique conflict conditions but that it also served as a perfect canvas onto which issues of morality that confronted every Christian reader could be projected.

Likewise, the soldier was an infamous motif of disorder in the early modern age. He was often perceived as a deracinated figure, uprooted from his own home and social network and placed instead in a company of like-minded fellows, whose loyalty was to their paymaster alone. Just as the Devil recruited for his army, so too did army recruiters. The ultimate transient, he was a figure of violence, rapine and plunder, prone to outbursts of ferocity and savagery even when kept under an equally vicious and severe disciplinary regime. On the battlefield, on forage and in quarters, the stresses of his existence and temptations available to him risked not only his body but also his soul. He acted as a dreadful example who, despite his myriad sins, still had the potential to be saved. This mirrored the same struggle for salvation every human faced.

Miriam Rieger has drawn attention to the famous case of Peter Otte, a soldier who claimed he had entered into a Satanic pact in 1665 only to later recant it.⁸⁶⁹ He became a celebrity, touring Protestant northern Europe, a testament to his own prodigal narrative and potential for conversion. His story also acted to reaffirm belief in the satanic pact, witchcraft and an intrusive devil at a time in the late seventeenth century when these ideas were increasingly being dismissed as absurd by an educated minority who were themselves often accused of atheist tendencies. Otte's case was not unique and Jonas Johns in 1665, Tyllus Weiss in 1676

⁸⁶⁸ Ephesians 6. 10-17; 1 Timothy 6. 12, 2 Timothy 4. 7.

⁸⁶⁹ Rieger, *Teufel*, 166-171.

and Christian Haacke in 1709 claimed to have abjured their pacts, sought repentance and thus secured a livelihood for themselves as recruiters in God's army instead.⁸⁷⁰ The contract that bound a soldier to service, the lifestyle it encouraged and the risks it presented had clear parallels to that of the satanic pact. One entered into a pact with the Devil to prosper and enjoy his protection for the time frame of the agreement. Chance was a variable that had the potential to affect a soldier's life more so than any other. The ability to stay the *Todeskugel*, the bullet with one's name on it, or win in cards were factors making such pacts more attractive and credible.⁸⁷¹ For Rieger, Otte's conversion, in effect a driving out of the devil from the soul of until then, a lost sheep, was one example of how spirit belief was manipulated in the late seventeenth century in the cause of orthodox Protestantism.

The Devil and his demonic cohorts were also at times depicted in military attire. Such dress not only reflected the soldier's occupation but his social status and allegiance, particularly in an age when uniforms were increasingly becoming part of a codified system of court dress. In a typical devil tale, Satan was reported to have arrived dressed as an officer, at a smithy in Meissen desiring a steed to be reshod.⁸⁷² Another story told how two spirits dressed as soldiers appeared to an alchemist seeking forbidden knowledge.⁸⁷³ A further tale told how the Devil dressed as a Prussian officer offered a satanic pact to a Berlin woman.⁸⁷⁴

The lifestyle of the soldier was notorious on the field of battle and off it. The temptations open to him in camp were the subject of many a supernatural story and the themes of drink, pride, youth, greed, lust, swearing and violence were recurrent motifs in these tales. In the typical tale or parable, the soldier was presented with a choice of conversion or damnation with the ghost appearing either to warn the sinner or celebrate their demise. Though human in shape, the identity of the spirit was often clearly the Devil and it involved the *Überzähliger* folkloric motif, where an unknown man joined the proceedings.⁸⁷⁵ The most famous of these tales involved gambling, most often with cards. A typical example of this legend is found in the diary of Peter Hagendorf, a soldier and diarist in the Thirty Years' War, who recorded how a new player asked to join a game. In an atmosphere punctuated by cursing and swearing,

⁸⁷⁰ Rieger, *Teufel*, 170-1.

⁸⁷¹ Rieger, *Teufel*, 175-6; Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 294-5.

⁸⁷² Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 507.

⁸⁷³ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 242-4; Beaumont, *Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise*, 301-5.

⁸⁷⁴ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 2-3.

⁸⁷⁵ Lecouteux, *Encyclopedia*, 291.

the game proceeded until the cloven hoof of the new player was spotted under the table and everyone fled, the Devil himself disappearing with a horrible stink.⁸⁷⁶ Another regular trope was that of the Devil's health being toasted or taken in vain. Heinrich Roch (d.1709), a jurist and chronicler of Bohemia and Silesia, recorded one such version of this tale, setting it on the 9th December 1643 in Bernstadt in Saxony when three soldiers at a table drank to his health only for Satan to appear and assault them.⁸⁷⁷

A story which highlighted three cardinal vices of the soldier, cursing, bravado and venery, was found in Sinclair. Set in Lyons, it detailed the story of a Lieutenant Jacquette who feeling lusty one night invoked 'the devil's dame'. Shortly afterwards, he met a masked woman who invited him and his two subordinates back to her quarters 'in a low house hard by the city wall'. He had his ways with her before 'according to the custom of French gentlemen', he invited his two comrades 'to partake of the same pleasure'. She then told them that if any had known her true identity, 'none of them would have ventured upon her' and whistled whereupon they all vanished. The two corpses of his companions were found under the city wall the next day 'among the ordure and excrements' while Jacquette himself survived a little while longer to confess this tale before he died.⁸⁷⁸ It was a tale that condemned soldiers' use of prostitutes, the bombast and bravado that peppered military talk as well as having a sly dig at the French. It closely resembled another of Francisci's stories of a soldier who indulged the night with a prostitute only to wake up the next morning beside a rotting donkey.⁸⁷⁹ We have already encountered demonically possessed corpses, manipulated by the Devil for sexual intercourse with witches. Here we find something similar with temptation, fornication, flesh, corruption and the Devil bound tightly together within the narratives.

Another tale that explicitly linked a soldier, the Devil and a corpse was related by the German physician and theologian Christian Frantz Paullini (1643-1712) and attributed to a Colonel Fischer who told of 'a truly godless corporal' who mocked the devil, believed neither in heaven or hell and was, to boot, 'a dreadful swearer, brandy drinker and tobacco smoker'. Riding past the gallows one night in full moonshine, the corporal saw the hanging corpse take

⁸⁷⁶ J. Peters (ed.), *Peter Hagendorf - Tagebuch Eines Soldners Aus Dem Dreissigjahrigen Krieg* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2012), 123.

⁸⁷⁷ Roch, *Neue Lausitz'sche Böhm und Schlesische Chronica*, 301-2.

⁸⁷⁸ Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World*, 108-9.

⁸⁷⁹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 845.

on the appearance of the devil with 'a long crooked tail, cloven hooves and horned head', a fearful experience that led to a complete Christian conversion in his lifestyle and habits.⁸⁸⁰ It is interesting to observe the range of activities Colonel Fischer's corporal indulged in and those Craig Koslofsky noted regarding coffee houses and cafes as key sites for debate regarding spirits in late seventeenth-century Europe.⁸⁸¹ He mentioned that the new philosophy, and the sites where it was discussed, were smeared with the supposed excesses that occurred in those places at night. The moral of this story was that atheism was linked to vice and that the mocker would get his comeuppance.

Many tales focused on the importance of a good death, a crucial moment in determining the fate of the soul of the deceased. The ideal was to die relatively painlessly in bed, surrounded by family, having made peace with those one had wronged in life and after having imparted salutary advice to loved ones left behind. The death most soldiers experienced on campaign was far from this ideal. Even then, like criminals prior to execution, there was still the one last chance to repent, to confess one's sins and be saved. It was the rejection of this that ghost parables played on in narratives focused on this topos. It shared similarities to stories of atheists dying badly on their deathbeds. There was the story of a colonel set in 1630, following a war over Mantua in Lombardy, who cared little for heaven or hell. It was found in Francisci's *Höllische Proteus* and the *Historische Todes=Post* written by the Evangelical pastor of Plauen, Johann Gottfried Lembach.⁸⁸² The colonel dictated that on his death, he should be given an extravagant funeral and that the remainder of his estate be spent by his comrades on 'boozing, eating and whoring...so long as the money lasted'. When his death came, his testament was followed to the letter only for the revels to be disrupted by the noise of rattling chains and the advent of 'a large, monstrous fire in which anyone could see his shape under the fierce burning blaze'. Some of the revellers died on the spot from terror with the remainder dying within the year. Though set in war, the moral was clear and spoke to a wider

⁸⁸⁰ Christian Franz Paullini, *Anmuhtige Lange Weile Oder Allerhand feine/ außerlesene/ seltene und curieuse Discursen/ Fragen und Begebenheiten/: Sampt Derer Erörterung/ Männiglich zum ergetzlichen Nutzen und erbaulichen Zeit-Vertreib/ Wohlmeinend abgefasst / Von Christian Frantz Paullini* (Frankfurt am Main, 1703), 480-1. 'einen zwar gottlosen Corporal... ein schrecklicher flucher/ Brantwein=und Toback=Säuffer gewesen... länglicht=gekrümmten Schwantz/ gespaltenen Bocksklauen/ und gehörntem kopff'.

⁸⁸¹ Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire*, 240.

⁸⁸² Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 435-38. 'sauffen / fressen / und buhlen ...so lang das Geld währete...ein grosses ungeheures Feuer / in welchem ein jedweder seine Gestalt / unter der grimmig-flammenden Lohe / erblickte...ein ruchloß Leben / gemeinlich auch ein ruchlos Ende folgte'; Lembach, *Historische Todes=Post*, 70.

audience of how 'a nefarious life was usually followed by a nefarious end' and how the last laugh would be on the sinner.

Another of Francisci's tales was set in the aftermath of a Turkish war in the time of Mehmed IV (1642-1693) with an arrogant, young noble challenging a garrison commandant to a duel over a matter of precedence of entry into the Rhenish town of Andernach. Duelling itself had long been recognised as the curse of the younger nobility and condemned as a serious sin. The night before the duel, he was awoken in his quarters to see 'a white spirit' which came up to him in bed, pulled aside the covers and 'with its fist, gave him a raw hit on the left side of his body, namely under the short ribs'. Fearing it as an evil omen, but consumed by pride, he went ahead with the duel only to be struck in the very same spot by his opponent's bullet from which he would die three days later.⁸⁸³

The last tale we mention here from Francisci was that set in the winter of 1674 in Luxembourg. A soldier deserted the garrison only to be caught and sentenced to death as was the custom. Hoping for a reprieve, he converted to Roman Catholicism though this did not mitigate the sentence. As he was being led to execution, drunk on brandy, he cursed his new faith and declared that as he had lost all hope from men, 'so I will mount the ladder in the Devil's name'. The following night, four of the watch encountered a fiery spirit that demanded brandy. Asked its identity, 'the spirit answered, do you not recognise he who was hanged yesterday? At which he disappeared'.⁸⁸⁴ A litany of sins followed one after another but even at the end when repentance was still possible on the steps of the gallows, he foreswore hope in salvation and perished.

⁸⁸³ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 1-4 'ein weisses Gespenst... mit der Faust ihm / in die Weichen an der lincken Seiten deß Leibs / nemlich unter den kurtzen Rieben / einen empfindlichen Schlag gab'

⁸⁸⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 766-68. 'so will ich / ins Teufels Namen / auf die Leiter steigen...antwortet der Geist / Weist du nicht / wer gestern gehenckt worden? Womit er verschwunden'.

War and Survival in a Liminal Environment

Jay Winter, paraphrasing Eric Leed, remarked that 'given the noise and disorientation of battle, myths and stories tend to quieten and reorder the world'.⁸⁸⁵ When looking at the supernatural in war, ghosts contributed meaning to an event at the time and afterwards, when a narrative was imposed on the experience. War was a liminal environment *par excellence*, where death could come at any instant and thus attempts were made both to forestall this and give reason and purpose to it after it had happened. Yu Fu Tuan described superstition as 'rules by which a human group attempts to generate an illusion of predictability in an uncertain environment'.⁸⁸⁶ Patrick Mullen, writing about the occupational culture of twentieth-century Texas fisherman, noted how anxiety pervaded 'the fisherman's world because there are so many factors over which he has no control and no understanding' and that 'the ultimate answers are unknowable mysteries which only a belief in the supernatural seems to explain'.⁸⁸⁷ The role of fate as a force in one's death or survival thus assumed greater importance in war. The early modern mindset, based on a closer link between the material and spirit world, was one already on the outlook for signs. The soldier required such signs even more. To compound this, ghosts were one of the most dreadful and portentous signs possible. Ghosts were a feature of this supernatural system, in both learned accounts stretching back to the classical period and popular experience. Gillian Bennett noted how many apparitions were 'bound by neither time nor place' but rather 'their only context is that of a crisis in the lives of the living'.⁸⁸⁸ The Scottish theologian David Cairns related the famous account of a Great War army chaplain telling him that 'The British soldier has certainly got religion; I am not so sure, however, that he has got Christianity'.⁸⁸⁹ In looking at early modern military ghost belief, such an observation may also be valid when we compare Christian ideas of Providence alongside more popular understandings of fate and warning.

Seeing a ghost was especially dangerous, as this spirit could be construed as a warning that the death of someone connected to the seer was imminent or that the visitant would die

⁸⁸⁵ J. Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 67.

⁸⁸⁶ Tuan, *Landscapes*, 9.

⁸⁸⁷ Mullen, *I Heard the Old Fishermen*, 42.

⁸⁸⁸ Bennett, 'Heavenly Protection', 93.

⁸⁸⁹ Winter, *Sites*, 64.

soon. The sighting of a spirit could even be the direct cause of death itself. In a sermon echoing 2 Kings 20.1 and Isaiah 38.1, the English preacher Thomas Hodges (d.1688) noted how 'If a Ghost should appear to us, we should be apt to think, that we should die shortly'. This would be

like the Messenger to Hezekiah, set thy house in order for thou shalt dye: and probably would put us into Bellshazzars posture, when he saw the handwriting upon the Wall, would make our countenance change, would make the joynts of our loyns to be loosed, and our knees to smite one against another. And one would think, that such a fear, terror and consternation, might reasonably minde us, of what we had done, namely, to undo our selves: and what we should do to escape the wrath to come, or the damnation of hell.⁸⁹⁰

Death was prevalent enough in the early modern civilian sphere. For the soldier, death was even more present as he existed on the cusps of two worlds, mired in sin and killing. The occupational subculture of the soldier demanded even greater attention to the signs around one, not least apparitions of the dead. Aside from seeking signs predicting the future, one could also see instances where fate or Providence clearly intervened to deflect the *Todeskugel* or fateful bullet with one's name on it. The Puritan church leader Richard Baxter mentioned the 'strange preservacions' in wartime which included bullets being stopped by hat linings and bibles, or ropes breaking when prisoners of war were to be hanged.⁸⁹¹ One could also be more pro-active and employ means to alter fate or protect oneself with what essentially was battle-magic. George Sinclair, the Scottish mathematician and demonologist, recorded instances which he attributed to papists and the Irish of charms they used to 'make them shot-free when they go to War'.⁸⁹² Georg Paul Hönn noted how magicians would offer to make the gullible impervious to blade or bullet.⁸⁹³ John Aubrey described 'Hard Men' amongst the Parliamentary Army who wore 'Sigills in metall' about them which acted as a 'Preservative against a Sword'.⁸⁹⁴ He claimed that Martin Luther had witnessed a demonstration of the power of their preservatives against harm at the Saxon court when one 'Hard-Man' was

⁸⁹⁰ Thomas Hodges, *The Vanity of Man at his best Estate, and the Vanity of Dives, his Desire when at his worst viz. to have a Preacher sent from the Dead to his Fathers House / discoursed of in two Sermons, the first before the University of Oxon, the Other at Ayno in Northamptonshire, at the Anniversary for the Foundation of the Free-school there, by T.H., B.D., sometime Rector of Souldern in Oxfordshire* (London, 1676), 30.

⁸⁹¹ Baxter, *Certainty*, 162-3.

⁸⁹² Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World*, 83.

⁸⁹³ Hönn, *Betrugs-Lexikon*, 444.

⁸⁹⁴ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 76.

directly shot at, leaving 'only a blew spott on his skin where he was struck'. Supposedly, only a silver bullet or cudgels could kill them.⁸⁹⁵

There were stories of hunters entering into satanic pacts to obtain magical bullets.⁸⁹⁶ One could presume that soldiers too might have had an urgent need for such ammunition. Cunning men were found in armies, one tale recording a soldier who was 'much given to conjuring' practising necromancy and enquiring after the fate of a city surrounded by the Turks.⁸⁹⁷ The drummer perceived as behind the Tedworth haunting 'used to talk much of gallant Books he had of an old Fellow, who was counted a Wizzard' though it was not clear if he had practised magic in the army itself or had resorted to it as a means of survival once demobbed.⁸⁹⁸ The ability of some soldiers to unfailingly locate hidden treasure and plunder, a role that spirits often performed in situ or by supplication, was at times attributed to magical powers. One such corporal under the Swedes was mentioned by Praetorius.⁸⁹⁹ Francisci also described magicians, found in both Swedish and Imperialist ranks, who could create illusions of armies or squadrons of riders to cause confusion among the enemy, a practice he claimed to have heard of frequently during the Thirty Years War.⁹⁰⁰ One example he referenced was a Swedish officer who could conjure spectres of additional soldiers to reinforce his ranks in case he encountered a stronger enemy in combat.⁹⁰¹

Soldiers were one group not specified by name in Lavater's and Tallepied's list of occupations most likely to see ghosts. However, the military life encompassed those who were sentinels and seamen, those who led 'all their life not only in the daytime, but also in night, in iorneying, in the water, woods, hills and vallies'.⁹⁰² They had to cross the wilds. They kept watch at the boundaries which included bridges, roads and walls. They were often stationed in old buildings such as castles, prisons or churches with their own history and agency. At times, they were at sites of slaughter and execution. They were occupants of liminal and haunted places *par excellence*, keeping watch, at haunted times in a profession which involved killing and sin. They also most certainly had their own occupational subculture of stories and tales

⁸⁹⁵ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 154.

⁸⁹⁶ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 73-5.

⁸⁹⁷ Burton, *Kingdom*, 69-70.

⁸⁹⁸ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 281.

⁸⁹⁹ Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 480.

⁹⁰⁰ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 213-5.

⁹⁰¹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 214.

⁹⁰² Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 88; Tallepied, *Treatise*, 94.

shared amongst them. The most famous literary example must be the ghost appearing in the first act of *Hamlet* to those keeping watch on the battlements of Elsinore.⁹⁰³

Baxter recorded two cases in the English Civil War. A Royalist soldier, Simon Jones, as he stood watch on College Green in Worcester, saw 'something like a headless bear' which affected him so much that afterwards he 'lived Honestly, Religiously, and without blame'.⁹⁰⁴ Another time, a Cromwellian soldier on sentry-duty at St James House was attacked by 'an affrightening shape' upon which he opened fire and then later made a report to his superiors.⁹⁰⁵ In 1627 in Magdeburg, a sentry reported seeing Satan in the shape of a soldier and then as a huge dog before disappearing.⁹⁰⁶ Francisci recalled the story of a headless horseman who would be frequently seen by the watch of an unspecified location and who was believed to be the apparition of an unhappy soldier who had killed himself.⁹⁰⁷ At times, the ghost could actually function as a supernatural sentry, beating the bounds of a place and keeping watch over it. Graben zum Stein recorded the apparition of a general who had been shot in a siege, continuing to make his rounds between 11 and 12 at night of the watch-posts in Vyšehrad, Prague, before disappearing into a ruined gun emplacement. The same author claimed that a famous spirit was seen after the battle of Oudenaarde (1708) at midday and midnight, keeping watch from a certain bastion. He wrote that 'examples can often be found where the Devil shows himself in the shape and tasks of those that have gone to war'.⁹⁰⁸

Spirits often conveyed warnings, particularly in wartime. They possessed knowledge mortals lacked, whether this might be of affairs beyond the grave and no longer accessible to the living or, a suprahuman intelligence finely honed by long years of observing man. They could also be direct messengers of the divine. The Bible had a long tradition of warning or annunciation by direct angelic intervention. One spirit, usually interpreted as a masquerading demon evoked by the Witch of Endor, told Saul he would die the following day. There was also the tradition of prophecy within the Bible such as when Jesus foretold the destruction of Jerusalem.⁹⁰⁹ Alexandra Walsham cited instances of prophecy as 'impeccably Protestant in

⁹⁰³ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I, 1, 4, 5.

⁹⁰⁴ Baxter, *Certainty*, 58-9.

⁹⁰⁵ Baxter, *Certainty*, 57-8.

⁹⁰⁶ Vulpus, *Magnificentia Parthenopolitana*, 118.

⁹⁰⁷ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 400.

⁹⁰⁸ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 132. 'man findet oft Exempel, daß sich der Teufel in der Gestalt und Verrichtungen solcher Leute, die dem Krieg nachgehen, gezeigt hat'.

⁹⁰⁹ Luke 21. 20-24.

theology' and showed a continuity between the medieval period and early modern Protestant age.⁹¹⁰ The classics too had their share of gods, spirits and ghosts that intervened in great men's lives to warn them of their fate. It was one the early modern stage popularised.

The same model was to be observed in spirit warnings delivered to early modern leaders during war. Famous examples included a spirit in the form of an old man that appeared to James IV (1473-1513) at Linlithgow in church before the disaster at Flodden (9 September 1513) to tell him to delay his expedition and place no trust in women.⁹¹¹ Louis II Of Hungary (1506-1526) had been warned by an apparition that he would lose his crown at the battle of Mohács (29 August 1526).⁹¹² A 1692 pamphlet told of a spirit that had appeared in William III's camp in Flanders to a sentry called Hussey to warn him that 'the King is to be made away, if care be not speedily taken' and then showed him a likeness of the potential assassin. The soldier failed to pass on the spirit's warning and was beaten by it the next night when it reappeared. Fortunately for King Billy, the spirit announced the spy had 'gone back to the French, but was last night shot in the Guts by an Out-Centry of theirs'.⁹¹³ These messenger spirits were a well-used trope in medieval and early modern texts, one where the spirit revealed itself directly to its target or would, through an intermediary, demand access to the ruler to convey a secret message.⁹¹⁴ In January 1681 a spirit had demanded that an Elizabeth Freeman go from her home in Hatfield to London, to warn the king that the 'Royal Blood' would be poisoned.⁹¹⁵ In the medieval period, there was the famous case of Jeanne d'Arc (c.1412-1431). Likewise, in the modern period, Marian apparitions at Fátima in 1917 with its secret message for the pontiff and Medjugorje in 1981 (on the site of a 1945 atrocity killing of 66 Franciscans) mirrored early modern tales of spirits giving messengers warning to deliver to those in power.

⁹¹⁰ Walsham, *Providence*, 213.

⁹¹¹ Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World*, 26.

⁹¹² Anon, *Vielförmige Hintzelmann*, 97-98; Martin Fumée, *The Historie of the Troubles of Hungarie containing the pitifull Losse and Ruine of that Kingdome, and the Warres happened there, in that Time, betweene the Christians and Turkes. By Mart. Fumée Lord of Genillé, Knight of the Kings Order. Newly translated out of French into English*, by R.C. Gentleman (London, 1600), 32.

⁹¹³ Anon, *A True and Impartial Relation of a Wonderful Apparition that happen'd in the Royal camp in Flanders, the Beginning of this Instant September, 1692, concerning King William. / In a letter to a Gentleman in London, from his Friend, a Captain in the King's Camp* (Edinburgh, 1692).

⁹¹⁴ Brown, *Fate*, 20; Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 87.

⁹¹⁵ Anon, *A Choice Collection of Wonderful Miracles, Ghosts, and Visions* (London, 1681), 2-3.

Sometimes the warning of death was to a wider community. In bright moonshine, Death was seen by soldiers of the watch cross the moat and wall of Leipzig on the night of 5th December 1666 with close attention paid to where he had come from and where he was going.⁹¹⁶ Christian Schöttgen, in his history of the town of Wurzen, related the story of a Swedish soldier, Andreas Stahl, who was stationed in the town in February 1707. As he was riding to the settlement, just past the place of execution, he encountered a tall man with a scythe who told him that he too was going to Wurzen and that its inhabitants should prepare for death as he had done good work there nigh on a hundred years before, probably a reference to its sack by the Swedes in 1637. The soldier testified under oath in front of his major in the town-hall to the veracity of this incident.⁹¹⁷ War and soldiers not only raised the risk of violent death as they were deployed across the landscape but also the threats of plague and starvation as supplies and housing were requisitioned or destroyed by their movements and predations.

For a modern reader divorced from the early modern providential mindset, these warning spirits can prove troublesome when applied to contemporary understandings of what a ghost is. Most usually, they were understood to occur before an event rather than after it. They were a product of the divine or angelic in the natural world rather than the result of any human spirit. This was the learned narrative of guardian angels or that of the angel of death. However, the roles they performed as protective spirits, whether at moments of crisis or as psychopomps in death and in the shape of loved ones or dead kin should give pause for thought. Whereas the stranger dead can be threatening, one's own dead can be more supportive.⁹¹⁸ Furthermore, a theologian's sharp classification of the difference between the angelic and human species did not necessarily reflect the reality of popular thought. Certain early modern writers recorded or toyed with the idea of the evil dead being transformed into demon-like entities.⁹¹⁹ Today in popular culture, the dead (and living) are regularly depicted as assuming the features of angels or devils depending on their perceived moral status and afterlife fate.

⁹¹⁶ Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glücks-Topf*, 398-9.

⁹¹⁷ Schöttgen, *Historie*, 679-80.

⁹¹⁸ Bennett, "Alas Poor Ghost!", 41, 49-50.

⁹¹⁹ Joseph Glanvill, *A Philosophical Endeavor in the Defence of the Being of Witches and Apparitions with some Things concerning the famous Greatrek's written in a Letter to the much honoured Robert Hunt, Esq.* (London, 1668), 22-3; Taillepie, *Treatise*, 132-3; Baxter, *Certainty*, 3-4; Bekker, *World Bewitch'd*, 145.

Ghosts in the medieval and early modern period often functioned within the *ars moriendi* tradition of warning a person of their imminent death. This allowed them time to set their affairs right with their Maker and loved ones. The ghost would show a sign and either give a warning that death would occur within a set period or typically would happen the same day, three days or a week after the apparition itself.⁹²⁰ Such spirits were also found in war narratives, with the likelihood of premature death a more constant concern for those involved. One such tale was recorded by Peter Goldschmidt of a Count Broy, an officer on the Imperial side, who near the end of the Thirty Years' War was woken from his sleep one night by the apparition of a tall black man who told him to be ready for death in three days. As a token of his impending fate, he opened his fist to reveal three bullets. Three days later, in an encounter with the Swedes, he was shot through three times.⁹²¹ There was also the story of the Graf von Nassau who saw himself, headless, in the mirror before the 1664 battle of St Gotthard and knew that he would die.⁹²² Acephaly was a trope that indicated death as in the tale of Count Nadasti, a Hungarian rebel leader who saw a headless spectre in 1669 shortly before his own execution.⁹²³

The most folkloric examples of ghosts as messengers in wartime must be wraiths. A wraith was the apparition of a person that appeared to a friend or family member at or very near the moment of their death. The vision occurred to a witness in a place distant from the person who was dying or had died.⁹²⁴ It was a common belief, as mentioned here by Taillepie, that either their apparitions were seen or, 'Not infrequently those who have been killed in battle or have died quietly in their beds return and call their relatives, and they are recognised by their voices'.⁹²⁵ In the story of Colonel Bowen which we encountered earlier, a ghastly spectre appeared to his wife. Interestingly, the informant of the tale noted how 'at the first, we concluded the Wretch had been dead, but t'was otherwise, and therefore the more remarkable'.⁹²⁶ Glanvill noted that 'an audible Voice calling the Party by Name...was heard to have happened to some seamen upon the Sea'.⁹²⁷ Aubrey recounted the story of Mohun,

⁹²⁰ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogue*, II, 75-6, 250, 265-6.

⁹²¹ Goldschmidt, *Höllischer Morpheus*, 177-8.

⁹²² Lembach, *Historische Todes=Post*, 6.

⁹²³ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 153-4.

⁹²⁴ James VI, *Daemonologie*, 60; Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 77; Stockhausen, *Mira*, 3.

⁹²⁵ Taillepie, *Treatise*, 78.

⁹²⁶ Baxter, *Certainty*, 32.

⁹²⁷ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 410.

murdered on the orders of 'Prince Griffin' or Prince Rupert (1619-1682) before a duel in 1647 who at the time of his death at ten in the morning appeared to his sweetheart in her bedchamber before silently withdrawing.⁹²⁸ Francisci recorded the story of the Lord of Aubigné, set in 1580, who, despite his Protestantism, employed the Catholic version of the Lord's Prayer and received three invisible slaps as a result. Interestingly, the Lord understood it as a death messenger, occurring at the same time his younger brother, a captain, was killed in a skirmish that evening.⁹²⁹ Aubrey noted the story of the wife of Admiral Dean who saw a dream in which her husband was hit by a cannonball while at sea. Within 48 hours she heard he had been killed 'in the very manner aforesaid'.⁹³⁰ Another account of Aubrey's was that relating to Lady Viscountess Maidstone who saw, as it were, 'a fly of fire, fly around her in the dark', half an hour before her husband was killed at sea.⁹³¹ She had witnessed the same phenomenon when her mother in law, the Countess of Winchelsea had died. A story recorded by the English Jesuit John Gerard concerned 'a devout lady' and Catholic convert who was married to a nobleman who went off to fight in Ireland. She started hearing knocking on her bedroom door every night until she received news that her husband had died at the time the banging had commenced. Gerard interpreted the knocking it 'as if it were an angel warning her to pray for her husband's soul'.⁹³²

The story of the Margrave of Rambouillet who appeared to Margrave Preci was a wraith legend, set within the traditional structure of the post-mortem pact in a time of war.⁹³³ Both noblemen were friends and had made a promise to appear to each other in the event of their death in the war in which they were participants. Rambouillet went to Flanders but Preci was confined to bed with a fever in Paris in the Street of St. Antony under the care of a surgeon called Dupin. About five weeks later, early in the morning around six, the curtains of the bed were pulled aside to reveal Rambouillet, in boots and spurs just as he had been in life. Preci, overjoyed wanted to embrace him but his friend warned him not to touch him as he had come to fulfil his promise as yesterday evening he had fallen in a skirmish. Preci then saw the hideous wound in his friend's loins where he had been shot before Rambouillet suddenly

⁹²⁸ Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 106-7.

⁹²⁹ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 6-7.

⁹³⁰ Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 92-3.

⁹³¹ Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 123-4.

⁹³² Gerard, *Autobiography*, 225-6.

⁹³³ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 17-21; Calmet, *Phantom World*, 282.

disappeared. News soon came to the terror-stricken margrave that his friend had died in the exact manner and circumstances as he had witnessed. The tale exhibited the usual components with the after-death visitation as the consequence of a death pact, from the specificity of the time, location, mannerisms and actions of the apparition to the spirit's call for a change in morality and lifestyle of the survivor.

The story of Major Sydenham in the English record closely corresponded with many aspects of this tale.⁹³⁴ Both were tales of elite men who went to the wars and who made after death pacts in view of the risks they faced. Both related how one died and subsequently returned to deliver news of his fate and warning to the survivor to mend their ways. The ghost of Major Sydenham that appeared to Captain William Dyke declared that 'There is a God and a very just and terrible one, and if you do not turn over a new Leaf...you will find it so'.⁹³⁵ At one level, one is tempted to imagine men in their cups by the campfire on the eve of battle, wondering of their potential fate and that of their friends in the upcoming encounter, eager to seek meaning, reassurance and comfort in each other as they faced death. Indeed, this literary trope in a wartime environment played on this very expectation. However, it used traditional motifs of the death messenger to affirm the existence of life after death, the need for the living to mend their ways and conversely, the grave error of those who ridiculed such ideas alongside the proofs supplied by the spirit, often in the form of physical marks left on the visitant. The death pact messenger was a European wide trope, present in both medieval and early modern texts, in peace-time and war, attesting to its widespread and persistent popularity.⁹³⁶

One notable memorate where the spirit was understood as a ghost was that recorded in the Conway correspondence and by Aubrey of Lord Middleton who had made an after-death pact with Bocconi. While imprisoned after the battle of Worcester (1651), the ghost of Bocconi appeared to Middleton to inform him of his death but also that he would escape the Tower in 3 days, which he did in his wife's clothes.⁹³⁷ Supernatural assistance might be cynically construed as an attempt to deflect attention from the real reasons for an escape from the

⁹³⁴ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 342-5.

⁹³⁵ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 344.

⁹³⁶ Caciola, *Afterlives*, 2; Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogue*, I, 42-43.

⁹³⁷ Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 112-3; M.H. Nicolson (ed.), *The Conway Letters: The Correspondence of Anne, Viscountess Conway, Henry More, and their Friends, 1642-1684* (London: Oxford University Press, 1930), 345.

Tower by a man 'under three locks'.⁹³⁸ Being liberated from prison by a spirit also resembled episodes in Acts of the Apostles when Peter, Paul and Silas were freed through divine intervention.⁹³⁹ However, it also corroborates Eric Leeds' appraisal of the need to impose order through the suggestion of supernatural agency upon an event.⁹⁴⁰

A frequently encountered tale was that of the spectre of Sir George Villiers which appeared to Mr Towes to tell him to warn his son, the Duke of Buckingham of his 'wickedness and abomination' and his impending assassination.⁹⁴¹ Like the proverbial dog and its vomit, the duke ignored these warnings and was finally killed by a junior officer named Felton in Portsmouth as he was about to embark on another campaign to the continent.⁹⁴² The emphasis on the ghost as a figure of moral reproof and warning has dominated this tale at the expense of the military and wartime setting of this story during the Huguenot insurgency in La Rochelle. The print story contributed to the memory of the Duke as a divisive figure in the troubled reign of Charles I (1600-1649) and attempted to place and explain his grubby, political assassination within a wider providential context using traditional preternatural motifs. The apparition of Sir George to his former servant also shared parallels to the observation made by Jean Claude Schmitt for medieval ghosts that death did not end the social obligations of the subordinate to his superior but that 'the living vassal must continue to obey the orders of his dead master and lend assistance'.⁹⁴³

Spirits not only warned but occasionally stepped into the breach itself, providing aid and comfort while vindicating the righteousness of the cause they fought for. Jack Santino, in a study of occupational ghostlore in the airline industry, noted how 'people who work on the edge of the uncontrollable seem to find supernatural interpretations of experience meaningful'. The dangers in the job evoked a tradition of supernatural helpers to 'deal with this uncontrollable element' and 'where cognitive "holes" exist, symbolic and supernatural phenomena appear to plug them up' to provide 'cosmological and cognitive balance'.⁹⁴⁴ The legend cultivated around the Angel of Mons was perhaps the most famous example of a

⁹³⁸ Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 113.

⁹³⁹ Acts 12. 5-17; Acts 16. 25-7.

⁹⁴⁰ Winter, *Sites*, 67.

⁹⁴¹ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 345-6.

⁹⁴² Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, 110-112.

⁹⁴³ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 104.

⁹⁴⁴ J. Santino, 'Occupational Ghostlore: Social Context and the Expression of Belief', *Journal of American Folklore*, 101 (400) (1988), 216-7.

supernatural helper allegedly seen on the field of battle in the modern record.⁹⁴⁵ The tale itself was a mishmash of rumour, urban myth and carefully manipulated propaganda that then became part of military and wider folklore. We should be aware of the same processes when reading the early modern record. Contemporary sources were replete with classical accounts of similar supernatural battlefield helpers whether they were gods, spirits or ghosts.⁹⁴⁶ Likewise, there was an awareness in early modern texts of the role medieval saints frequently fulfilled as the role of helper in war and sieges in particular, rising to defend their shrines or cities associated with them.⁹⁴⁷ Augustine recorded one such story relating how when Nola was besieged by barbarians, Felix the Martyr appeared to the defenders to encourage them.⁹⁴⁸ Writers referred to the well-known incident surrounding the siege of Dramburg in Pomerania when forces under the Polish king Vladislav I were startled at night by an army of ghostly riders which enabled the defenders to make a sally and raise the siege.⁹⁴⁹ It bore remarkable similarities to the biblical story of how the city of Samaria was saved from an Assyrian siege when the sound of a great army approaching forced the Assyrians to lift the blockade and flee.⁹⁵⁰ The fortress of Alcazar, held by the Moors in Portugal, fell after the intervention of a white-clad heavenly host.⁹⁵¹ Likewise, the ghost of Pedro de Paz, a Spanish captain who had died a few months previously, was seen at the siege of Antwerp calling for his former comrades to follow him and repel the Dutch.⁹⁵² A Catholic tale in this instance, such legends contributed to the construction of a confessional and dynastic/national identity. For Protestants meanwhile, there was the story of a mysterious knight riding a white charger that harried the Catholic besiegers of Magdeburg during the Schmalkaldic War (1546-47).⁹⁵³ We can clearly see the influence biblical, classical and medieval tales had in the development of these tropes, with Protestants attributing helpful intervention to angels whereas demons would hound the wicked.⁹⁵⁴ Angels were common

⁹⁴⁵ Winter, *Sites*, 67-8; D. Clarke, *The Angel of Mons: Phantom Soldiers and Ghostly Guardians* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2004).

⁹⁴⁶ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 54, 56; Bromhall, *History*, 19-21.

⁹⁴⁷ Grosse, *Magica*, 22-4; Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead*, 378-83.

⁹⁴⁸ Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 64.

⁹⁴⁹ Guazzo, *Compendium*, 76-7; Del Río, *Denckwürdige Historien*, 33; Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 212-13; Bromhall, *History*, 26.

⁹⁵⁰ 2 Kings 7. 6-7; Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 86.

⁹⁵¹ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogue*, II, 68.

⁹⁵² Guazzo, *Compendium*, 68; Del Río, *Denckwürdige Historien*, 29-30.

⁹⁵³ K. Kurihara, *Celestial Wonders in Reformation Germany* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014), 76.

⁹⁵⁴ Francisci, *Höllische Proteus*, 213.

protagonists in Protestant supernatural stories of the time and, particularly as they usually appeared in times of crisis when help was sought, it is tempting, especially in view of the theology, to link these apparitions to the form and function saints and ghosts played elsewhere.

For those who died on foreign fields, far from their kin and loved ones who could ensure a proper burial, it was unclear whether news of their demise would ever reach home at all. Jay Winter claimed that half of the fallen in World War One on the Western Front had no known grave or were rendered unidentifiable by munitions.⁹⁵⁵ Modern warfare might provide technologies better suited to reducing a human to an unrecognisable pulp but at the same time, it has a better developed administrative complexity for keeping tags, literally, on its troops in the field or in captivity. The early modern soldier was exposed to a much greater degree to the risk of death outside the battlefield theatre from plague, atrocity and indiscipline as well as the risk that his death would go unreported. It was in the interests of those who deserted to be believed killed in battle and it was in the interests of the quartermasters to keep the dead on the payroll. If the authorities had difficulties keeping tabs on their troops, the situation for their loved ones at home, if any, was even worse. In Joseph Addison's play, *The Drummer*, the comic haunting is pivoted on the ambiguity surrounding the fate of the master Sir George, who was presumed killed in the last campaign though his body was never found.⁹⁵⁶ What was certain, with certain elites excepted, was that the remains of the dead were not coming home. Emotional closure demanded a corpse to grieve over and to administer the necessary ancestral rites of passage to. Social and legal closure demanded a corpse or the next best thing for property and rights to be transferred and for heirs to assume their rightful place. Remarriage could then occur and offspring from such unions be considered legal. Martin Guerre's case (1560) was the most famous early modern example of the potential chaos that could erupt with the return of the native long thought dead.⁹⁵⁷

The early modern sensitivity to portents, not least those of death, has already been noted. Signs were constantly sought in the world around one as pointers to one's own fate, those of loved ones and that of the country. Experiencing or reporting ghosts, visions and dreams were

⁹⁵⁵ Winter, *Sites*, 31, 36.

⁹⁵⁶ Addison, *Drummer*, 2.

⁹⁵⁷ N.Z. Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983).

one way of seeking closure as then the fate of the soldier or absent loved one was almost assured. Though the devil was infamous as a trickster and impersonated the living and dead, one must question whether the multitude, so often castigated for what was assumed to be their ignorance and papist proclivities, would always follow the literal and fundamentalist script of certain elites on issues, not least in cases as important as these. Drew Gilpin Faust drew attention to table-rapping as one means of negotiating the anxieties of separation and death that war caused loved ones back home during the American Civil War.⁹⁵⁸ Considering that in the early modern period popular divinatory practices existed to ascertain who would die in a parish in the oncoming year or who a woman's future husband might be, it could be suggested that similar such practices may have existed at the time or evolved to determine whether a loved one was still alive or not.⁹⁵⁹

Revenant Lovers

Revenant lover tales and ballads encapsulated the anxieties of men and women in love who were then forced apart through broken vows, deceit, ambition and on occasion war and service on the high seas. Such stories were not specific to war, but they found a perfect backdrop in the dislocation caused by military service, conflict, worry for absent lovers and then often the attempt to negotiate a new future without that person, either now dead or presumed so. War as a cause for separation was not merely realistic but was also potentially a more noble and dramatic end for elite protagonists in literary tales and song, than one from plague or accidental death. Ghosts played a powerful role in these tales as figures of justice and reminders of broken vows as well as appearing more folklorically as wraiths to signal their deaths.

Goldschmidt noted the story of a young lady from the von Kleist family in Pomerania who was betrothed to a nobleman called Gottberg and made a vow not to leave the other, even in the event of death. Gottberg became a cornet in the army, went away to the wars, was shot and killed, only to come back and announce his death yet renew his promise never to leave her.⁹⁶⁰

⁹⁵⁸ Faust, *Republic*, 180-6.

⁹⁵⁹ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 26; Bovet, *Pandaemonium*, 211-5; Praetorius, *Abentheuerliche Glückstopf*, 378-9.

⁹⁶⁰ Goldschmidt, *Höllischer Morpheus*, 183-7.

A similar story by the same author was that of Kortenbach and Quad, two lovers from Jülich along the Dutch borders. The latter died in the wars and returned, holding his hand to the place where he had been fatally wounded. Again, the promise never to leave her was made and it was believed that he continued to haunt her the rest of her life.⁹⁶¹

The failure to display proper mourning was one potential reason why the dead might begrudge the living and thus stories focusing on this theme affirmed its importance. As the victim was most likely a man, it was the woman who failed to perform her expected duty as survivor. It played on themes of female fickleness and suggested that unlike the man who would return from the grave for her, that her own love had never been as sincere in the first place if in death she could forget him so quickly. An English ballad entitled *A Warning for Married Women*, related the tale of a Jane Reynolds from near Plymouth who was wooed by a James Harris. He was pressed to sea and after waiting for three years, she finally learnt that he was dead and buried 'within a foraign land'. Marrying a carpenter in his stead and having children with him, she was left alone a few years later as he went off to conduct business. That night, a spirit claiming to be James Harris appeared, told her that he had been looking for her for seven years and bid her come with him, which she did. The carpenter husband returned to find his wife gone and promptly hanged himself.⁹⁶²

Though highly stylised entertainment tropes within their own genres and operating far beyond the remits of either Catholic or Protestant theologies, such tales embodied realistic fears concerning the fate of lovers, in these instances parted by war and military service. In ways, they served as warnings for women never to get involved with such men in the first place and consequently, for men to avoid such a career. For the lower orders, the army and navy were often seen as a refuge for scoundrels, of men escaping crimes and love commitments at home. One example of this was the soldier who murdered his master for money and then fled to Ireland to enlist under Colonel Hill before going to Hispaniola with the army. All the time, he was troubled and pursued by a headless ghost.⁹⁶³ One non-revenant lover or ballad ghost story on the same theme was the tale of the spirit of David Sutor which haunted a man in the form of a dog and eventually confessed to him that 35 years previously

⁹⁶¹ Goldschmidt, *Höllischer Morpheus*, 172-3.

⁹⁶² Anon, *A Warning for Married Women* (London, 1685).

⁹⁶³ Baxter, *Certainty*, 57-8.

he had killed a man and hidden his remains under a bush. After the murder, he had fled to the army. He appeared now to ensure his victim was given a proper burial.⁹⁶⁴ There were other stories where a more invisible Providence, rather than an apparition, unmasked and brought to justice men who had joined up after committing murder.⁹⁶⁵

In the famous ballad of *The Gosport Tragedy*, the question of the fidelity of transient soldiers and sailors was raised alongside the danger such men posed. The woman expressed her reservations to her paramour, 'Sweet William', citing 'For in the time of war to the sea you must go/ And leave the wife and children in sorrow and woe?/ The seas they are perilous, therefore forbear/ For I will not wed with a ship-carpenter'. However, she finally relented to his pressure and became pregnant, an event which forced him to re-evaluate his own commitment to the union, which he did, by promptly murdering her and fleeing to his ship. Her ghost pursued him, and justice was served as he confessed his crime and died the same night. The song ended with the warning recalling and cautioning 'Young men how innocent maids they enthrall/ Young men be constant and true to your love'.⁹⁶⁶

Going Home and Picking up the Pieces

All campaigns must end, and the winners and losers had to attempt to return home if possible and resume a peace-time existence again. Men and women came home deeply scarred with the memories of war and the dreadful atrocities they had witnessed, been victim to or had perpetrated. Others, with few other skills or safety net, sought continued employ in the military or in banditry. Those who returned home came back to a land possibly ravaged by war. David Warren Sabean, in his study of popular culture in early modern German villages, described how war 'left them deposited around villages with no effective ties, creating disputes over who belonged where and to whom'.⁹⁶⁷ Place had to be found for the widows, orphans and bastards of war. Questions of ownership were raised, of lands and rights seized,

⁹⁶⁴ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1 (Jan. 1731), 32.

⁹⁶⁵ Anon, *Life after Death*, 40-4.

⁹⁶⁶ Anon, *The Gosport Tragedy: or, the Perjured Ship-carpenter. Tune, Peggy's gone over Sea*. (London, 1720).

⁹⁶⁷ Sabean, *Power*, 9.

inheritances questioned, and paternities disputed. Feuds fed by wartime resentments, grudges and the victors' prerogatives could continue and indeed boil over.

Treasure and ghosts were intimately connected as we have already encountered. One common source of buried treasure was that of goods buried in wartime, either by the rightful owners to protect it from looters or swag hidden by those very same plunderers. Its location was forgotten or those who hid the treasure were displaced or killed in the conflict and could never return to the site where it had been buried.⁹⁶⁸ Churches and their goods were prime targets for looters. Many of these treasures and spirits were attributed in Germany to the Thirty Years War. Some examples include the White Lady seen at the gallows near Ammersbach in 1715 who was believed to guard 'a treasure from the old war time'.⁹⁶⁹ In late 1707 and early 1708, a spirit appeared to a boy in Leipzig telling him how to retrieve a treasure buried in the cellar of a miller, a place long suspected to have been a site where valuables were secreted during the Thirty Years' War.⁹⁷⁰ The disorder and dislocation of war also enabled treasure hunters and looters of historical sites as exemplified in Simplicissimus' expedition to a ruined mansion and his recovery of a treasure from its walls.⁹⁷¹

The Portmore ghost in County Antrim was one example of a spirit that tried to secure a legacy for its son lost in the turmoil of the Irish Wars. It appeared to David Hunter and claimed to be the spirit of a woman Margaret who had formerly lived there before the war and had a son by her first husband. He died, and she remarried a soldier and had several additional children with him. Her second husband, the soldier, disappeared from the tale, and instead, the son from the first marriage served as the breadwinner for the whole family. She told David Hunter to cross the Bann, get in contact with this son and tell him where she had hidden 28 shillings to pay her debts. She also told him to warn the son from her second marriage to change his ways and be more grateful to his foster brother for looking after him.⁹⁷² Themes of dislocation caused by war dominated this tale. The husband-patriarchal figure was absent, dead or missing, a soldier husband being no help with the first son assuming his role instead. That

⁹⁶⁸ Bräuner, *Physicalisch- und Historisch-Erörterte Curiositäten*, 238.

⁹⁶⁹ Anon, *Recht Ausführliche Relation dessen, was in der H. Christ-Abends-Nacht zwischen den 24. und 25. Dec. 1715 bey der Welt-berühmten Stadt Jena in einem, dem Galgen nah-gelegenen Weinbergs mit einer Schändlichen Conjuratıon und Beschwerung des Satans an einem Studioso und 2 Bauern sich zugetragen hat* (1716), 3. 'ein Schatz von alten Kriegs+Zeiten her daselben vergraben liegen'.

⁹⁷⁰ Grabens zum Stein, *Sagen*, 250-3.

⁹⁷¹ Grimmelshausen, *Simplicissimus*, 235-238.

⁹⁷² Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 387-90.

authority was subsequently challenged by an upstart foster brother. However, the money which the ghost would provide would cement his status in the family by paying for his mother's funeral and her debts. It was a tale that could have occurred outside conflict conditions though its context made it more forceful and relevant to people who had faced similar issues following the Civil Wars. The Bible was forceful in its condemnation of injustice against widows and orphans.⁹⁷³

Ghosts could also be subversive, their memory countering elite narratives of history. They could also act as forms of resistance to provide cover for illegal activity or as forms of slander. Episodes of Poltergeist activity at Tedworth (1661-2), Epworth (1716-17) and Woodstock (1649) were linked to a relationship between winners and losers. At Tedworth, the eponymous drummer was a demobbed soldier in the Parliamentary army, reduced to busking and possibly a side-line in hedge magic.⁹⁷⁴ In a dispute over alms and begging rights, his drum was seized, and livelihood threatened by representatives of the Restoration.⁹⁷⁵ The haunting that resulted, blamed at times on the drummer and witchcraft or the children, was potentially a case of weapons of the weak in action. At Epworth Rectory, Jeffrey, a spirit with Jacobite sympathies would beat loudly when prayers were offered for the Hanoverian king.⁹⁷⁶ The haunting at Woodstock palace, when occupying Parliamentary soldiers were sorely harassed by a poltergeist, drew a fine line between demonic infestation, a royal sacred site violated and an orchestrated attempt to scare interlopers witless. Though evidently playing on subversive themes, all three events were exploited in print to refute atheism and affirm the continuing relevance for religious and spiritual authorities mediating power relations.

War also redrew confessional boundaries and imposed new political and geographic realities across Britain, Germany and Europe. Miriam Rieger has stressed the importance of local conditions in understanding the origins and circumstances of hauntings such as that at Annaberg and Obercrossen where a spirit in the form of a pigeon appeared.⁹⁷⁷ At the end of the Thirty Years' War, some territories changed hands or were restored to their original rulers

⁹⁷³ Exodus 22. 22; Deut 24. 17, 27. 19; Proverbs 15. 25; Isaiah 1. 17, 10. 2; Jeremiah 7. 6, 22. 3; Ezekiel 22. 7; Zechariah 7. 10; Malachi 3. 5; James 1. 27.

⁹⁷⁴ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 281.

⁹⁷⁵ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 270-1.

⁹⁷⁶ K.D. Yates, 'Jeffrey the Jacobite Poltergeist: The Politics of the Ghost that Haunted the Epworth Rectory in 1716-17', *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, 50:2 (2015), 71.

⁹⁷⁷ Rieger, *Teufel*, 216-17, 93-94.

and resultant tensions as confessional primacy was restored were expressed and mediated, in some instances, by apparition stories. As noted throughout this thesis, securing and defining the boundary was one major function of ghost stories and this would have been a more pressing concern in areas where borders were just recently redefined, especially as state and religious authorities were often so closely connected. An example of this were supernatural stories about Bohemia. It was a kingdom with a long tradition of resistance to Rome, from the fifteenth-century Hussites to the revolt of its nobles against the Catholic Habsburgs in 1618. The crushing of this movement in 1620, the aggressive anti-Protestant and Calvinist edicts of that decade and re-Catholicisation campaign which Westphalia did not reverse, were major setbacks for the Protestant cause in Europe and a source of grievance. Graben zum Stein, when describing the spectral battle on the site of White Mountain, bitterly rued this defeat.⁹⁷⁸ Bohemia itself suffered religious and ethnolinguistic disputes between Germans and Slavs. It had a long history of revenants which potentially reflected these more Slavic elements. It also bordered and at times incorporated portions of Silesia, an area much like Bohemia in its ethnoreligious tensions and strong tradition of revenants popularised in seventeenth-century print across Germany and England. Sinclair pointed out that the 1659 haunting by the revenant apothecary Christopher Monig occurred in Crossen in Silesia, 'a part of Germany, which long since was under the Polonians, but is now subject to the Crown of Bohemia'.⁹⁷⁹

Demotic Histories

Ghosts had long been characters in historical, literary and theatrical works charting the history of great men and kingdoms. The question regarding the extent to which they featured as characters in a more demotic history, linked to the local landscape, is one that has still to be tackled for the early modern period. It is clear in collections of folklore for the late eighteenth and nineteenth and indeed twentieth centuries, that there was a direct link between ghost and specific places. Furthermore, many of these are associated with war, notably the Civil Wars for Britain and the Thirty Years War for Germany.

⁹⁷⁸ Graben zum Stein, *Sagen*, 137.

⁹⁷⁹ Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World*, 87.

The first question is whether we can find such evidence in the sources for the early modern period. The second question must be the extent to which these tales were representative of local oralities which tied stories to a specific place or were rather elite constructs which lacked a popular currency beyond a small circle of readers and commentators. In attempting to understand ghosts linked to historical events set in the landscape, we should first compare this with conventional learned interpretations of history based on the written and print text. The learned approach relied on the text, on chronologies, maps and events working out from the centre to affect the whole. The narrative was elite-centred, written by and aimed at legitimising the existence of the state, its ideologies and actors. This contrasted with how the telling of history operated within local environments in primarily oral-based societies. Andy Wood observed that early modern people 'wrote history into the landscape', an action which he called 'topographic writing'.⁹⁸⁰ For Daniel Woolf, history in oral societies was 'focused less on time than on space, less on dates than on locations'.⁹⁸¹ George Lipsitz noted how history started with the specific and then built 'outwards towards a total story'.⁹⁸² Instead of focusing on the broader sweep of history, oral history at the popular level attempted to represent the grander narrative through the identification of local places with certain events, real or imagined linked to it. There was also the propensity for oral societies to 'telescope' history and 'to shorten or omit entire portions of the past' and attribute landmarks, places and events with certain historical figures such as Cromwell, Caesar or King Arthur in England or with certain conflicts.⁹⁸³ Therefore, 'events which were significant to the neighbourhood...were remembered, while even historical incidents or individuals of national renown tended to be conceived of within a familiar setting'.⁹⁸⁴ These tales were powerful for their communities and thus had no need to be written down. However, the power and relevance of these tales only existed in the local setting.⁹⁸⁵ Beyond that, due to their oral nature and association with women and the aged, and their frequent contradictions with official ideology, they were

⁹⁸⁰ Woods, *Memory*, 228.

⁹⁸¹ D. Woolf, 'The "Common Voice": History, Folklore and Oral Tradition in Early Modern England', *Past & Present*, 120: 1 (1988), 31.

⁹⁸² Woods, *Memory*, 11.

⁹⁸³ A. Fox, 'Remembering the Past in Early Modern England: Oral and Written Tradition', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 9 (1999), 241.

⁹⁸⁴ Fox, 'Remembering', 234.

⁹⁸⁵ Fox, 'Remembering', 234.

dismissed as unworthy of the historical canon and were thus largely unrecorded by contemporary male writers.

I argue that ghosts were a demotic form of history, one usually linked to local place that simplified the narrative into heavily stylised and thus easily digestible nuggets in the landscape around one. It was one form of history most people encountered daily in their imaginations as they passed haunted sites. Whether the story itself had any basis in any historical event, there or elsewhere, was not so vital. Non-belief in the existence of ghosts did not negate the constructed historical memory and values which the hook of haunting facilitated. One need not believe in Marley's ghost to appreciate its theme of charity long after its reading. Nor did one need to fear a site to understand the tale attached to it. What mattered was that the story was there, attached to place and absorbed by the person. Place deserved its own legend which could be constructed in bricolage fashion around it.

If one follows this model of oral history linked to place, the scope for ghosts would be tremendous. Ghosts are figures of memory and morality tied to place. They recall a past but also present a tale in morality to the living, the cause of their haunting being tied to the contravention of moral and social norms and the manner of their deaths. Oral history and thus demotic history have been labelled seditious through their potential for conflict with the official ideology or narrative of events.⁹⁸⁶ The matter of ghost discernment was likewise one, clear in the English and German sources, where official orthodoxy clashed repeatedly with the reality on the ground which tended more towards an understanding of these spirits as the souls of the dead. The link between local history telling and ghosts would seem natural under such circumstances. However, one obvious flaw is present and that is the degree to which authentic evidence can be retrieved and the extent to which this vast depository of oral history has now been lost forever.

⁹⁸⁶ Fox, 'Remembering', 238.

A Seedbed for a New Ghostlore

The memory of the British Civil Wars and Thirty Years' War haunted post-seventeenth century mentalities up until the industrial age. Both the British Isles and Germany were horribly ravaged and scarred by these wars which saw no equal in the scale of death and destruction until the First World War. In Britain, the king had been publicly killed, an act of unprecedented sacrilege that both spawned a cult of religious hero and served as a future reminder of the limits of monarchs and their powers and primacy of Parliament and its elites. In Germany, the particularism and disunity of its electors, princes and bishops had allowed Habsburg Austria to assume too powerful a role, one that in turn had invited in the outside powers of Sweden, Denmark, France and Spain among others to counter this, fight their own proxy wars and thus devastate the Empire over a period of thirty years. Both wars had been sparked by issues of religion and the authority of the central monarch and dynasty in areas outside the English and German heartlands among the Scottish and Czech elites. The fractures from these conflicts travelled all the way to the centres of power in both Germany and England, shattering the brittle religious and political consensus.

Religion had been a central feature in both conflicts. Divisions in Protestantism had proven deadly in both countries. In England, it had helped spark a civil war. In Germany, it had allowed the Catholics to play Protestants off against each other and almost triumph. These wars were often framed within the paradigm of a culmination of the cosmological struggle between good and evil in the age of Anti-Christ. Catholics, Protestants and Calvinists resorted to brute force to establish their supremacies and destroy the other, after having failed to achieve this by conventional political means over the preceding period. Religion had largely defined the sympathies and cause of the King and Parliament, the Habsburg emperor and German princes. Though religion itself had not been the sole cause in either war, it was easy for later generations to place the blame for the blood-letting and chaos at its doors.

War raised the question of theodicy, where God had been amidst all the suffering. War was an instrument of His wrath and judgement as he reduced the abode of sinners to ruins where the satyr and other unclean spirits frolicked. However, He also permitted untold suffering amongst the Just. He allowed the destruction of Magdeburg, the defeats at White Mountain, the slaughter of Protestants in Ulster and the reversion of formerly Protestant heartlands

such as Bohemia to the papists. It was this silence of God, at a crucial time, that raised doubts regarding the dominant contemporary paradigm of a Providential God. It could suggest that God wasn't so concerned with what happened in the world as much as previously thought. More radically, it could also suggest that his silence was due to his non-existence. Furthermore, the factionalisation of Providence that occurred in the British Civil Wars, according to Alexandra Walsham, 'assisted in undermining its credibility and contributed to a growing disavowal of previous assumptions about the scope and legibility of divine activity on earth'.⁹⁸⁷

Christian theodicy was read through the trials of Job and how he stood fast in the faith despite being sorely tested. Job was also the example to be taken when confronted with spectres and evil spirits. Both were tests of faith. Ghost stories acted as one means of negotiating that trauma at a personal, local, national and confessional level. They gave meaning to the silences and provided a spiritual presence. They restored order to the chaos of war or the chaos war had left by imposing a moral narrative. They affirmed to the faithful and attempted to convince those who sat on the fence that God still existed, that he was good and still concerned himself with humanity. The ghost of Major Sydenham that appeared to Captain William Dyke, warned him that 'there is a God, and a very just and terrible one'.⁹⁸⁸

The conflicts of the early to mid-seventeenth century created an intellectual climate more open to questioning conventional religious orthodoxies. In England, the breakdown in traditional hegemonies opened a potential Pandora's box of radical political and religious ideas that forcefully questioned traditional assumptions. Mortalism and the death of the soul was one such issue. The more enduring legacy of these debates was the rise of rationalism and scepticism, intellectual currents which attempted in some measure to address the problems and causes that the long wars had exposed. A more enquiring attitude towards religion and supernatural certainties on matters such as witchcraft and spirits which could potentially question the power of the church was one consequence of a century of internecine religious rivalries which had bloodily spilt over in the previous generation. God still had a role, but not as central a one as he had previously.⁹⁸⁹

⁹⁸⁷ Walsham, *Providence*, 333.

⁹⁸⁸ Glanvill, *Sadducismus*, 344.

⁹⁸⁹ Maxwell-Stuart, *Poltergeists*, 139.

It was the reaction to this 'atheism' and 'Sadducism' that led to the penning of what would become the great ghost books of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The claim was that by denying the existence of one spirit within the invisible world, that the chain of connection that went all the way up to God would be broken. Just as Gregory I and Cluniac writers had employed ghost stories to address a wider audience and legitimise their own message, so did writers like Glanvill, More, Baxter, Bromhall and Sinclair in Britain and Francisci and later Goldschmidt in Germany. They used a story-telling medium already popular in the vernacular, namely that of tales of spirits, to convey their message of the proofs of a spiritual realm closely interacting with our own. These tales not only aimed at discrediting atheism but also affirmed the importance of moral and social discipline with the ghost an agent of that.

Previously, the enemy for those who had written authoritatively on such spiritual matters had been the Church of Rome, reflecting the processes of confessionalisation the Reformation had created. Lavater's *De Spectris* (1569) had defined the ghostly debate for almost a century with its emphasis on monkish trickery and demonic instigation as factors behind hauntings. Subsequently, it was plagiarised in form, argument and anecdotes by Protestant writers and Catholic critics responding to it. Though that enemy remained within the Protestant imagination, particularly in Germany, it receded to varying degrees to what was now castigated as the new bogeyman of the age, the atheist. A new trope of the atheist receiving his spectral comeuppance came more to the fore. An anonymous 1758 text posited that 'If the fields of Endor are not sufficient to convince unbelievers, surely the plains of Philippi cannot fail of satisfying even heathens themselves in this point'.⁹⁹⁰ Both places were linked to war. Both places were sites where the most famous ghosts in the Bible and classical record appeared respectively, namely the shades of Samuel and Caesar.

The spectres we find in the English and German ghost-books are certainly not all spectres of war in the sense that they have a military setting or protagonists. However, the context in which these tales were written and publicised, and the stresses that gave cause to their writing, were often very much a consequence of war. They provided the basis for a Protestant national ghost folklore, much more independent of the Catholic purgatorial trope and with less need to demonise it. The mass death and trauma war created potentially demanded a

⁹⁹⁰ Anon, *Life after Death*, iv.

more human spirit than the Purgatorial pickpocket of the past which had been more focused on defining and demonising the Catholic other. Instead of merely acting as cyphers for Catholicism, war with its anxieties and consequences was a catalyst for a more practical spirit to appear in print. That was not to say that traditional Protestant tropes regarding Catholic ghosts vanished. Rather, multiple interpretations regarding their identity and purpose appeared in print sources which until then had been dominated by the satanic paradigm. In Germany where greater confessional tensions made the rehabilitation of the ghost as a human spirit far more difficult, the spirit remained much more demonic in Protestant religious texts. However, it acted as an instrument of discipline, highlighting and admonishing the ways of the wicked and was equally keen on the restoration of justice and order.

Unlike in England where Catholicism was no longer the threat it had been in the mid to late sixteenth centuries, in Germany it was different. Germany was exposed, as the Thirty Years War had just cruelly demonstrated, in a way which England with its geographical island isolation and single Protestant monarchy based in London was not. English writers could experiment with ghost stories where the spirit was much more human than previous Protestant orthodoxies had allowed. Purgatory was much less a threat as the mechanics of economy of that sacred largely did not exist anymore. This contrasted with Germany where borders to popish powers were much closer, whose territories were regularly crossed by popish priests and whose titular head was the Catholic emperor. Protestants would go to Catholic priests to obtain the sacramentals their own ministers refused to give them.⁹⁹¹ Scott Dixon noted how in 1592, peasants in Protestant Hetzelsdorf had organised a courier system for sending their herbs to the Catholic priest in nearby Bretfeld to have them consecrated.⁹⁹² Protestants could also cross confessional borders to attend Catholic church services and even Jesuit missions as was claimed for the Upper Palatinate in 1721.⁹⁹³ Luther, whose memory and example were now lionised in a way that bore some uncomfortable similarities to those of the saints, had also made the question over that economy of the sacred and the role of monks and ghosts in it much more central than had occurred in England. Thus, the confessional interpretation which had stressed the demonic over the human element in

⁹⁹¹ Scribner, 'Reformation', 269-70.

⁹⁹² Dixon, *Reformation and Rural Society*, 175.

⁹⁹³ T. Johnson, 'Blood, Tears and Xavier-Water: Jesuit Missionaries and Popular Religion in the Eighteenth-Century Upper Palatinate', in Scribner and Johnson (eds), *Popular Religion*, 191-2.

hauntings remained a defining feature in German ghost belief long after it had lost that primacy in England.

It is unsurprising that the ghosts that dominated the print sources for the English Restoration period were those demanding justice for criminals and those protecting the rights of heirs and the dispossessed. Ghosts embodied the stresses and anxieties of a time made more intense by the trauma of war and were figures of morality and moral reproof. Sasha Handley has argued for the pastoral role ghosts played in texts and tales employed by divines to bind a religiously divided English society closer together in the period after the turmoil of the Civil Wars.⁹⁹⁴ Clearly, the stresses and memories of war contributed to the spectral tropes that gained currency in print and the wider public sphere in the restoration period, one that embodied both state and popular concerns. Jay Winter cited bereavement and attempts to mediate it as the themes of his work on the Great War.⁹⁹⁵ Ghosts were just one motif in this mediation between memory, trauma and a return to everyday existence. The same was also true for many aspects and tropes of ghost belief in England and Germany in the early modern age, particularly the period following the Civil Wars and Thirty Years' War.

The stories in the ghost-books of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries served to define what a traditional ghost story was for later generations. Initially marketed to fight atheism and affirm moralities in the late seventeenth century, the popularity of these collections and their appeal to a wider popular audience ensured their longevity. As collections of many stories under one cover, they were easier for printers to publish and for readers to buy. They became in effect an unofficial canon of stories. Perhaps in the late seventeenth century, they did not truly reflect the folkloric tradition, favouring polemic over authenticity as Gillian Bennett cited for England.⁹⁹⁶ However, by the early to mid-eighteenth centuries, they had become what a ghost story was expected to be. The critic of witchcraft persecution, Francis Hutchinson (1660-1739), listed and condemned 'these books and narratives' which 'are in tradesmen's shops and farmers houses and are read with great eagerness and are continually leavening the minds of the youth, who delight in such subjects'.⁹⁹⁷ The *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1732, set out the stages through which belief in

⁹⁹⁴ Handley, *Visions*, 26, 48.

⁹⁹⁵ Winter, *Sites*, 5.

⁹⁹⁶ Bennett, 'Ghost', 10-11.

⁹⁹⁷ Hutchinson, *Historical Essay*, The Dedication.

ghosts was inculcated in the populace, from the stories of bugbears told by nurses, through 'traditional Accounts of local Ghosts' and 'suburban ghosts rais'd by petty Printers and Pamphleteers consequent to their halfpenny bloody Murders'.⁹⁹⁸ In Germany, the *Höllische Proteus* of Erasmus Francisci and the works of Otto von Graben zum Stein were condemned in similar terms for establishing a plebeian canon of tales by Johann Christoph Harenberg, the evangelical writer and historian.⁹⁹⁹ They and other tales from early modern German chroniclers and antiquarians became the basis for many of the stories gathered by nineteenth-century collectors like Johann Grässe, which then were repackaged as regional and national folklores.¹⁰⁰⁰

This leads onto my more ambitious claim. The wars in Germany and England became the seed-base for a later folklore, just as happened with ghost stories set in the American Revolution. The collection of what were construed as national folklores boomed in the nineteenth centuries when nationalisms demanded a closer identification between the land and its citizens, one that linked local place and memory to a wider national character and historical narrative. Folklore stories of war were a critical element in the making of these myths as they involved violent death. They tied contemporary states and ideologies to the purported blood sacrifice of their (purported) ancestors which legitimised contemporary claims to place. Inevitably, many of these tales involved ghosts.

In the case of England, the ghosts of the Civil Wars acted alongside formal print accounts of the time to forge an identity packaged around Parliament, constitutional rights and the fight against absolutism. The Glorious Revolution was also a key feature of this narrative. The past justified the present system of parliamentary democracy at home. It also validated foreign policy and imperialist expansion overseas as a civilising mission. Absolutism was castigated as a foreign and quintessentially papist system of government, one that already had a long legacy in English mentalities due to the Reformation. The antiquary Francis Grose quipped that 'dragging chains is not the fashion of English ghosts; chains and black vestments being chiefly the accoutrements of foreign spectres, seen in arbitrary governments: dead or alive,

⁹⁹⁸ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 2 (Oct. 1732), 1001-2.

⁹⁹⁹ Harenberg, *Wahrhafte Geschichte*, 43.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Johann Georg Theodor Grässe, *Sagenbuch des Preußischen Staates*, 2 vols (Glogau, 1868/71); *Der Sagenschatz des Königreichs Sachsen* (Dresden, 1855).

English spirits are free'.¹⁰⁰¹ Ghosts of Cavaliers and Roundheads recalled a time when Englishmen fought for their liberties and put the king firmly in his place. The ghosts of the Restoration that followed reminded one of the importance of order and that property, rights and justice were supernaturally sanctioned and to be respected.

Meanwhile, in Germany, formal histories of the Thirty Years' War were supported by its ghosts which told of a weak and divided land facilitating domination by foreigners and outsiders, war and misery. Austria had been part of this problem all along, playing the same role of spoiler to a united Protestant Germany in the nineteenth century just as much as in the seventeenth century. France too was responsible. Tales of phantom monks dragged up the old spectres of papistry at a time when the Prussian state and Second German empire were at odds with the Catholic powers abroad and Catholic subjects and citizens at home. All served as constant reminders in texts, mentalities and the landscape of the suffering of that time and consequently the need to avert that in future. That could only be assured by being united, strong, under one leader rather than many and ready to take the fight abroad rather than endure it on German land.

Conclusion

So, was Aubrey correct to say that printing and gunpowder chased away the fairies and phantoms? This was clearly not the case as this chapter has shown. Tales of spirits, ghosts and supernatural events, on the contrary, found a relevance in the liminal environment that war was, in coming to terms at a personal and wider level with the slaughter and carnage it caused and in healing the wounds and countering threats the post-war reality presented. Ghost belief operated as one means of overcoming the trauma and as a seedbed for future folklores and myths. This has been already argued to be the case in the American Civil War and First World War. The same was true, as this chapter has shown, for early modern England and Germany coping with the conflicts of their own time, most notably the Civil War in the former and the Thirty Years' War in the latter. In the First World War, the man who cried that there was no God, was promptly silenced with a bullet.¹⁰⁰² The struggle against the same threat of atheism

¹⁰⁰¹ Grose, *Provincial Glossary*, 10.

¹⁰⁰² Winter, *Sites*, 66.

gave cause for early modern writers to collect and craft their ghost stories accordingly, one where the existence of spirits was clearly demonstrated.

Elements of what Aubrey said potentially did ring true. He did claim the same process had been happening in France over the previous thirty years, a result of an hegemonisation of rural and archaic mentalities by the Jesuits as agents of centralised religiosity.¹⁰⁰³ Thirty years was almost two generations. Cultural patterns shift as history demonstrates, especially when stimulating, and being stimulated in turn, by an ever more powerful medium of communication, namely print. Perhaps we can mediate both views. I argue that war, as an experience, was potentially as defining as theology on ghosts. War acted as catalyst and catalysed within the narrative of the Reformation. Ghosts were not part of a static folklore but adapted to address newer concerns and newer needs as well as express traditional anxieties of place, moralities and ritual. Older tropes disappeared or were recycled and reinterpreted. Reginald Scot crowed triumphantly in the 1580s that the Scripture had driven away walking spirits. Perhaps gunpowder in league with printing drove away the primacy of certain older tropes and instead presented newer ones of more relevance to contemporary needs. Anti-Catholic tropes continued, particularly in Germany, though they had to co-exist alongside spirits much more relevant to the times. These were the spirits raised by war and by coming to terms with its aftermath. Disseminated in print, they became the basis for a new literary and oral mythology of the ghost, one that is still familiar to us today.

¹⁰⁰³ Aubrey, *Remaines*, 55.

Thesis Conclusions

The supernatural is complex, contradictory and multifaceted. A single, simplified explanation imposed from above cannot encompass and adequately address the multitude of situations and experiences it embodies. Furthermore, belief itself comes in bundles and is localised to places, phenomena and experiences and often contradicts the wider overarching philosophy or theology people might publicly identify with or profess. People may indeed identify themselves as Protestant or Catholic yet hold views divergent from the learned orthodoxy on many, many issues.

These themes have dominated my approach throughout this thesis. When looking at ghosts, we saw how different places and experiences evoked different anxieties and thus often different tropes of spirits. Despite what theologians claimed, there was never a single plot but rather multiple storylines. We have seen how Protestants built on a pre-existing vocabulary of the supernatural and how they colonised that. I chose two areas, place and war, as subjects of this study. Place was especially critical as it was constantly encountered and was the stage upon which these stories were set. War too was important, showing the rich and varied nature of early modern haunting. We also encountered the rival interpretations in these belief bundles which the Protestant interpretation had to compete with, whether these had their roots in Catholic or more atavistic tropes.

Ghosts can't be reduced to mere playthings or creations of theologians which scored confessional points. They survived in the popular imagination because they were relevant. They performed a vast array of social functions as we have seen. They affirmed the importance of society's values and rituals, and they guarded and defined its borders. They negotiated themes of memory, grief, morality, theodicy, justice and order. They also embodied the fear within our species regarding our physical and perceptual limitations. Ghosts were one way of naming these fears and imposing order. They were a way of making sense of the world, thus explaining their longevity and popularity across time and cultures. For most people, they would almost certainly have remained one of the most familiar and constant aspects of the supernatural within their lives. They constantly encountered tales of

apparitions in the landscape around them. The dark reminded them of the spirits that still squatted there from childhood. They all knew tales of ghosts that intervened in the affairs of the living, that sought redress from the wicked and justice for themselves, and that affirmed the morality, rituals and sacred spaces of their society. Whether they believed or not, was ultimately less important than is often argued. As legends, just by their telling alone, they served their purpose. Though they increasingly fell outside the mainstream of the educated discourse of the eighteenth century, they retained this relevance at the popular level for describing and embodying the uncanny and inexplicable and placing memory and morality in the landscape.

Ghosts have been understood as figures embodying anxieties. Much of the surviving record was written by religious writers who saw in the ghost a mirror for their own confessional and existential anxieties. For most of the period, the ghost was a bugbear for Protestant divines, encapsulating all that was wrong with Popery. Later, in the seventeenth century, the threat of atheism to the power and legitimacy of the now established religious authorities demanded a similarly robust reply. The systemic shock war posed to the fabric of society, one that provoked increasing scepticism regarding the intervention or, at times, the very existence of the divine, was one that tales of ghosts and spirits were hoped to counter. It is in dealing with these two threats that so much of our surviving evidence comes down to us.

Early modern theologians sought to impose order upon popular beliefs and offered tidy answers for actually very complex questions. They set out an overarching cosmology, one all linked by a chain of connection down from God to the pettiest of demons, sprites or ghosts. In a time when the veracity and righteousness of one Christian sect were proven over that of another by its claim of fidelity to biblical exactitude, they tried to transpose this exact, perfectly aligned, fundamentalist framework of reference and understanding upon a supernatural more varied and ultimately much older than Christianity itself. One should also not forget the importance the legacy of classical Roman and Greek writers played in assisting these definitions.

It was vital to possess these spirits and the places and experiences in which they appeared, or at least, deny them to the enemy. By appropriating them, the righteousness, authority and pastoral methods of Protestantism and its ministers were affirmed, which in turn, theoretically, denied and delegitimised the Catholic interpretative and pastoral paradigm,

casting that in turn as demonic. They were too useful to abandon as they were part of the direct encounter with the supernatural which religion defines and mediates. They could not be left in the hands of the enemy or discarded. Once the Purgatorial pickpocket lost access to its fence, the massing priest or monk, much of the power in that specific trope was lost. Instead, that threat could be beaten into a weapon itself by Protestant regimes and writers, one to turn against its Catholic enemies, one satirising and demonising its rival. Just because it became a lying spirit in no way denigrated from its power. The binary division of the supernatural into demons and angels reflected the confessional and political binaries that fractured the continent.

The building blocks were already in place. There already existed a common language of the supernatural, a body of legendary tropes and tales that embodied anxieties of place, morality and process. This language had been a product of the Greco-Roman learned tradition, Germanic, Celtic and Slav paganisms and a Christianity whose roots lay in the near east but had quickly assimilated a wider Mediterranean heritage. Over the centuries, these all had influenced and been influenced in turn by each other. The learned influenced the popular, the popular the learned. There was no need to invent a new language. Rather, there was a need to adapt, harness and possess this language and deny it to the enemy.

There is a consensus that medieval Catholicism had been more successful in its own appropriation of the ghost, by adapting itself to existing beliefs and providing means of defence against them. We should be aware of the potential for slur here, as it suggests that Catholicism had compromised itself to achieve this. There is also the idea that the persistence of ghost belief was an indication of the resilience of Catholicism and that this belief was in some ways more inherently Catholic than Protestant. I hope this thesis has shown that Protestants were just as haunted as Catholics though the terms they used to define this supernatural may have varied from case to case.

However, we should be aware that Catholicism too shared an uneasy relationship with the ghost and could not fully appropriate it, as shown throughout this thesis. Tropes and solutions for revenants were a clear example of this, these persisting in Germany much longer than in England. Many of the difficulties Catholicism had faced in the medieval period in colonising this territory mirrored later struggles Protestants would encounter.

This thesis follows in the footsteps of Alexandra Walsham who argued Protestantism as reinforcing an enchanted worldview despite its many claims to the contrary.¹⁰⁰⁴ Furthermore, my study into ghosts corroborates her view that the Reformation and early modern period should be understood as a natural continuum of the preceding medieval era.¹⁰⁰⁵ It also supports her opinion that Protestantism ‘reinforced ancient beliefs about the dangers involved in polluting holy spaces and structures’.¹⁰⁰⁶

Throughout this thesis, we saw how supernatural tropes that had existed in the medieval period were continued over into the early modern era often with a new interpretative gloss. These newer veneers embodied pre-existing anxieties but also confronted more contemporary confessional issues or recycled older tales in the war against atheism. An example of this was the continued popularity of the death pact haunting, which continued through from the medieval into the early modern period. Warning ghosts and portent spirits also rolled over. In Germany especially, we have more surviving evidence for ghosts that continued to perform traditional roles emphasising the sacrality of place, most notably the purity of the churchyard. This was one largely absent from the English ghost-book collections of writers such as Glanvill, More, and Baxter. This silence is intriguing but most likely is an indication of editorial control rather than the absence of popular belief on this topic considering the numerous denunciations and satires of peasants afraid to cross a churchyard at night. We have already asked why and got the answer to their fears. We noted how those more recent interpretations were modelled on older ideas and how they competed with them. Tropes associated with the Wild Hunt were understood as evil in the late medieval and continued to be so by Protestants in the early modern period. Though lights in the countryside at night had been at times interpreted as souls in distress, early modern Protestant writers emphasised their misleading nature instead, one again that had existed in the late medieval. Haunted buildings stayed haunted. The outcast dead of suicides and notorious sinners remained outcast.

Writing in 1603, the English divine Samuel Harsnett mocked the time of ‘Popes and his holy Legats’ who made ‘Images to speak, vaultes to sound, trunks to carry tales, Churchyards to

¹⁰⁰⁴ Walsham, *Providence*, 334.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Walsham, *Providence*, 328-9.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*, 293.

swarme, houses to rush, rumble and clatter with chaynes, high-waies, old graues, pittes, and wood ends to be haunted with lights'.¹⁰⁰⁷ From the evidence presented in this thesis, despite the bravado of some commentators, we can see little change between 1503, 1603 or indeed, 1703. Admittedly, the state no longer sanctioned the Purgatorial economy of the sacred or its agents, monkish or ghostly, who marketed it. Tropes may have disappeared from print but that did not mean they had disappeared yet from popular usage or memory. Some had been reduced to parodies, demonic or otherwise, of Catholicism, but certainly, neither the legendary landscape nor the popular mindset was any less haunted. This thesis has shown that there was no single monolithic trope. There was no age when the Purgatorial ghost or the lying demonic spectre totally dominated the spectrum of ghost belief. Supplicating spirits of the dead did not fade to be replaced by raging poltergeists. The ghosts of property, inheritance and murder so frequent in the works of Glanvill and company did not eradicate the spirits that haunted uncanny places and sites of power and pollution.

Throughout this thesis, we have seen examples of supernatural tropes that lacked any scriptural reference, or with which even Christian theology, Catholic or Protestant, had difficulties and had failed to explain coherently. This clearly points to atavistic conceptions of ghosts and the dead which could exist in pockets of belief, in certain places and for certain situations, yet remain largely isolated from the more overarching cosmological explanations of the theologians. For a start, not all apparitions were those of the dead. Some were those in the process of dying, one which could take up to a year when we think of prophetic apparitions approaching the church porch at midsummer. Their deaths were forewarned and potentially they were in a liminal zone between life and death. Wraiths appearing to distant loved ones at the moment of death were another aspect of this. Yet, even here we are at a loss to explain the identity of the others in the ghostly funeral trains, who or what the White Lady of Brandenburg was, or how seeing one's own double was usually a bad omen. Contradictions at a scriptural level existed in the idea of being warned of one's own death by apparitions or other signs. Taillepié, as a Catholic, though acknowledging these beliefs, then

¹⁰⁰⁷ Samuel Harsnett, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures to with-draw the Harts of her Maiesties Subjects from their Allegeance, and from the Truth of Christian Religion professed in England, vnder the Pretence of Casting out Devils. Practised by Edmunds, alias Weston a Iesuit, and Diuers Romish Priestes his Wicked Associates. Where-vnto are annexed the Copies of the Confessions, and Examinations of the Parties themselves, which were pretended to be possessed, and dispossessed, taken vpon oath before her Maiesties Commissioners, for Causes Ecclesiasticall* (London, 1603), 135.

went to on say that 'we must not attach any faith to such beliefs, which are superstitious, for no man knows the hour of his death'.¹⁰⁰⁸ Providence could be used by theologians to explain certain things, but it became downright unseemly when applied to the many wonderful, strange and macabre apparitions which haunted the early modern popular mindset. Henry Bourne lambasted 'the ignorant part of the world' which

is still so aw'd that they follow the idle Tradition of the one, more than the Word of God: and have more Dependence upon the lucky omens of the other than his Providence, more Dread of their unlucky ones, than his Wrath and Punishment.¹⁰⁰⁹

There was also the whole world of fairies, dwarves, nature spirits and house spirits which shared the same space and tropes as ghosts. Theologians could dismiss these spirits as the fallen hosts of Lucifer yet their human aspect, tied to figures of memory, as with Rübezahl of the Giant Mountains or the spirits of Blackdown Hill, certainly suggests a blurring of identities. Revenants were another clear example of a more ancient understanding of the dead, one that persisted in parts of northern and central Europe longer than others. They had no place in Holy Writ and the physical methods used to dispatch them certainly lack Scriptural corroboration.

Peter Marshall wondered if the Protestant view 'was simply too cruelly counter-intuitive ever fully to take root in the popular consciousness'.¹⁰¹⁰ I argue, from the evidence presented, that for the majority of ghost stories this was irrelevant. The vast majority of ghosts we have looked at were legendary tropes, of strangers to the readers and listeners, positioned usually within a landscape of fear, acting as dangerous spirits of place. It mattered little if the spirit was a soul or a devil if encountered in a dangerous liminal place. What was important was that it was dangerous and frightening. It still conveyed a moral message, defining the bounds of society and in cases of portent spirits, warning of death, regardless of its ultimate identity. It still emphasised the importance of correct ritual practice and purity of places such as the graveyard. As old places, many of the stories connected with them, or places like them, would have been old or embodied older tropes. Furthermore, the stranger, legendary dead are threatening in every society. The ancients had recognised a difference between the *Lares* and

¹⁰⁰⁸ Taillepiéd, *Treatise*, 86.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Bourne, *Antiquitates*, xi-xii.

¹⁰¹⁰ Marshall, *Beliefs*, 263.

Larvae, the protective ancestral spirits of the household and the dangerous dead of strangers. It follows on the theme developed by Gillian Bennett, that legendary and stranger dead are ghosts whereas dead loved ones and kin are something else. They are encountered and interacted with differently.

So, was the Protestant appropriation of the ghost successful? The Reformation had set out to overhaul not merely a corrupt and tired Church in its view, but also a sinful people of God, just as the Old Testament prophets had tried before them. However, despite its best efforts, the Reformation failed to eradicate venery, gluttony, greed, envy and all the other sins. Why should it have any greater success with ghost belief, especially if this was far down its list of priorities for its limited means to deal with? The state and religious authorities had larger fish to fry and its scant resources and direct intervention were necessary elsewhere. The resources and centralisation necessary for such a task would stretch the capacities of a modern totalitarian state, never mind an early modern one. It was much cheaper to tweak what one had, patch, re-varnish and rebrand the old as the new rather than build from scratch. Scott Dixon posited that the process of Protestantisation involved a process where ‘people were not converted, beliefs were not abandoned; aspects of popular belief were simply invested with different values until the original context of thought was shattered’.¹⁰¹¹ This study has looked at this for ghosts, specifically regarding certain places and certain experiences associated with them and with wartime. It has corroborated this model, though instead of succeeding in completely shattering earlier beliefs, the Protestant viewpoint became one more, albeit an extremely influential one, in discerning meaning and cause behind haunting.

¹⁰¹¹ Dixon, *Reformation and Rural Society*, 201; Walsham, *Providence*, 331.

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- The Mad Merry Pranks of Robin Good-Fellow. To the Tune of, Dulcina* (London, 1663)
- *MANS Amazement: It being a True Relation of one Thomas Cox, a Hackney-Coach-man, to whom the Devil appeared on Friday Night, it being the 31st. of October, first in the likeness of a Gentleman, seeming to have a role of Paper or Parchment in his hand, afterwards in the likeness of a great Bear with glaring eyes, which so affrighted him, that it deprived him of all his Sences* (London)
- Merckwürdige Und Warhafftige Begebenheit, Wie Selbige Mit J. G. E. Bey Beschwerdeung des Teuffels, Aus Des so Genannten D. Faustens Höllen-Zwang Sich Zugetragen: Alles in Richtiger Ordnung Und Wie Es Von Tag Zu Tag Vom 2. Octobr. Biß Den 21. Decembr. A. 1707. Ergangen, Denen Insonderheit Zu Dienst, so Wider Die Wahrheit Und Eigentlichen Verlauff Dieser Remarquablen Sache, Durch Geschriebene Und Gedruckte Erzehlungen bißhero Ungleich Berichtet Worden, Vor Augen Geleget Bey Anfang Neuer Zeit* (Leipzig, 1708)
- Monsieur Colbert's Ghost, Or, France without Bounds being a Particular Account by what Ways it has Attain'd to that Supream Grandure, and Relating the Secret Intreagues of the French Kings Ministers at the Courts of most of the Princes and States of Europe, with Remarks there upon: Also some Reflections on the Interest of those Princes* (Cologne, 1684)
- A most Strange and Dreadful Apparition of several Spirits & Visions at several Times seen and Spoken to, on the 14, 15, and 16th of this Instant July, 1680, at the House of Mr. John Thomas, Junior, Next Door to the Sign of the Crown, at Cow Cross, in the Parish of St. Sepulchres, London ...: With Many More Circumstances Not here Related, but Will be Certainly Justified for Truths, by the (Credible) Spectators* (London, 1680)
- The most Strange, Wonderful and Surprizing Apparition, Or, the Ghost of General C---n which Appeared to the Man Who Wore the Yellow Sash at the Battle of Dettingen* (London, 1680)
- Mr. Ashton's Ghost to His Late Companion in the Tower* (London, 1691)
- Murder Will Out being a Relation of the Late Earl of Essex's Ghost Appearing to My Lord Chancellor in the Tower* (London, 1683)

- The Murtherer Justly Condemned, Or, an Account of George Feast, a Butcher of Shoreditch, being found Guilty ... for the Barbarous Bloody Murther of His Wife ... also some Account of His Penitent Behaviour in Newgate. To the Tune of, Packingtons Pound.* (London, 1697)
- A Narrative of the Demon of Spraiton in a Letter from a Person of Quality in the County of Devon to a Gentleman in London: With a Relation of an Apparition Or Spectrum of an Ancient Gentleman of Devon, Who often Appeared to His Sons Servant, with the Strange Actions and Discourses Happening between them at Divers Times: As Likewise the Daemon of an Ancient Woman, Wife of the Gentleman Aforesaid, with Unparell'd Varieties of Strange Exploits Performed by Her: Attested Under the Hands of the Said Person of Quality, and Likewise a Reverend Divine of the Said County: With Reflections on Drollery and Atheism, and a Word those Who Deny the Existence of Spirits* (London, 1683)
- A New Apparition of S. Edmund-Bery Godfrey's Ghost to the E. of D. in the Tower* (London, 1681)
- *A New Ballad of The Midwives Ghost: Who appeared to several People in the House where she formerly lived in Rotten-Row in Holbourn, London, who were all afraid to speak unto her; but she growing very Impetuous, on the 16th of this Instant March, 1680, declarred her mind to the Maid of the said House, who with an Unanimous Spirit adhered to her, and afterwards told it to her Mistris, how that if they took up two Tiles by the Fire-side, they should find the Bones of Bastard-Children that the said Midwife had 15 years ago Murthered, and that she desires that her Kinswoman Mary should see them decently Buried; which accordingly they did, and found it as the Maid had said. The Bones are to be seen at the Cheshire-Cheese in the said place at this very time, for the Satisfaction of those that believes not this Relation* (London, 1680)
- A New Copy of Verses Call'd the Heiress's Lamentation, Or, Pity Too Late to the Tune of the Torments of a Long Dispair* (London, 1690)
- The New Yeares Wonder being a most Certaine and True Relation of the Disturbed Inhabitants of Kenton* (London, 1643)
- Das Ober-Croßnische Tauben-Gespenst: Das Ist: Eine Überaus Curiose Jedoch Wahrhaftige Beschreibung/ Von Einem Sonderbahrem Geiste/ Welcher Sich in Gestalt Einer Gantz Schnee-*

Weisen Tauben/ Zu Ober-Crossen Nahe Bey Uhlstädt Gelegen/ Sehen Lasset ... Wie Solches außführlich in Der Nachfolgenden Relation Zuersehen (Leipzig, 1695)

---*Oliver Cromwell's Ghost at St. James's (London, 1680)*

---*On the Pretended Ghost of the Late Lord Russel (London, 1683)*

---*The Patient Wife Betrayed; Or, the Lady Elizabeths Tragedy. Which was Acted between a Knight Her Husband, and a Wicked Woman His Whore. To the Tune of, Chevy Chase, Or the Lady Izabells Tragedy (London, 1695)*

---*A Proper Ballad, Intituled, the Wandring Prince of Troy. To the Tune of, Queene Dido (London, 1648)*

---*Pyramus and Thisbe: Or, Love's Master-Piece. Behold the Downfall of Two Lovers Dear, and to their Memorys, Let Fall a Tear, a Sad Mistake their Ruine did Procure, when as they Thought their Friendship should Endure; Oh Cruel Fate! that Cut them Off in Prime, and for Enjoyment, would Afford no Time. To the Tune of, Digby's Farewel (London, 1670)*

---*Recht Ausführliche Relation Dessen, was in Der H. Christ-Abends-Nacht Zwischen Den 24. Und 25. Dec. 1715 Bey Der Welt-Berühmten Stadt Jena in Einem, Dem Galgen Nah-Gelegenen Weinbergs Mit Einer Schändlichen Conjuratation Und Beschwerung Des Satans an Einem Studioso Und 2 Bauern Sich Zugetragen Hat (1716)*

---*A Relation of a Strange Apparition in an Ale-House Next Doore to the White Horse, Against Sommerset-House in the Strand Where a Company of Papists were at their Exercises: As is Conceived the Devill in an Ugly Black Shape Disturbing them, and Tea-Ring the Rugge and Scattering it in Pieces Up and Down the Roome: With a Relation of a Iudgement that Strangely Fell Umpon One at Mr. Mundayes House in Little Brittain: Who Whilst He was Cursing of Mr. Burton, Mr. Prinne and Doctor Bastwicke His Eares Fell a Bleeding to the Amazement of the Beholders. (London, 1641)*

---*A Relation of the Bloody Massacre in Ireland Acted by the Instigation of the Jesuits, Priests, and Friars Who were Promoters of those Horrible Murders, Prodigious Cruelties, Barbarous Villanies, and Inhuman Practices Executed by the Irish Papists upon the English Protestants with an Account of the Spanish Inquisition (London, 1689)*

- A Relation of the Strange Apparition of the Five Jesuits Lately Executed at Tyburn upon the Account of Treason. being a Wonderful Token of their Disquiet, and some Things Considerable Referring to their Guilt. Discovered to Two Gentlemen of Eminent Credit, upon the Road between London and Acton, Travelling for Chippenham in Wiltshire. Closed Up with an Ingenious and Merry Piece of History, Concerning no Jesuits in Hell* (London, 1680)
- Sad and Wonderful Newes from the Faulcon at the Bank Side being a True and Perfect Relation of the Strange Visions, Ghosts, and Apparitions seen in the House and Garden of Mr. Powel a Baker, Lately Deceased (a Man Eminent in the Borough of Southwark.) with the Manner of their Appearing in several Shapes; both at Noon-Day, and at Night, since Thursday Last: The Discourse between the Ghost of Mr. Powel, Mr. John Simson (Formerly Minister of Bishops-Gate) to Whom He Revealed the Cause of His Walking.* (London, 1661)
- Shaftsbury's Ghost to Doctor Oats. In a Vision, Concerning the Jesuits and Lords in the Tower* (Edinburgh, 1683)
- Sir Edmondbury Godfrey's Apparition to Nat. Thompson* (London, 1682)
- Sir Edmundbury Godfreys Ghost, Or, an Answer to Nat. Thompsons Scandalous Letter from Cambridge, to Mr. Miles Prance, in Relation to the Murder of Sir Edmundbury Godfrey* (London, 1682)
- Spectrum Anti-Monarchicum. Or, the Ghost of Hugh Peters, as He Lately Appeared to His Beloved Son, the Whole Assembly of Fanatick Presbyters* (London, 1679)
- Squiee Norton's Ghost: Or, A Full and True Account how He has Appeared Three several Times to His Aunt* (London, 1699)
- The St James's Surprizing and Afrightful Apparition* (London, 1722)
- Stephen Colledge's Ghost to the Fanatical Cabal* (London, 1681)
- Strange and Dreadful News from the Town of Deptford, in the County of Kent being the Full, True, and Sad Relation of One Anne Arthur, Who According to Her Own Report, had Divers Discourses with the Devil, on the Third of this Instant March 1684/5. Who Offered Her Gold and Silver; Telling Her Many Strange and Wonderful Things; and, in the End, Carried Her in the Air a Quarter of a Furlong, &c. Together, with the Life and Conversation of the Said Party;*

and Directions to the Place of Her Abode. And a Particular Relation of the Sad Distractions She Fell into, upon the Occasion; and Divers Other Circumstances Relating Thereto (London, 1685)

---*A Strange and Fearful Warning to all Sonnes and Executors (that fulfil not the will of their dead Fathers)* (London, 1623)

---*Strange and True News from Long-Ally in More-Fields, Southwark, and Wakefield in Yorkshire 1. The Wonderful and Miraculous Appearance of the Ghost of Griffin Davis (at the House of Mr. Watkins in Long-Ally) to His Daughter Susan Davis ... 2. A More Exact Relation of the Strruge Appearance of the Ghost of Mr. Powel Near the Faulcon ... 3. The Heavy Judgment of God Shewed on Jane Morris a Widdow Near Wakefield in Yorkshiere ... / the Truth Hereof is Averred by Sir. Rich. Keys, Mr. Hare, and several Other Persons of Quality* (London, 1661)

---*The Strange and Wonderful Apparition, Or, the Advice of Colledge's Ghost to the New Plotters* (London, 1683)

---*Strange and Wonderful News from Exeter Giving an Account of the Dreadful Apparitions that was seen by Mr. Jacob Seley of Exeter on Monday, September the 22th, 1690, Who Gave the Full Account to the Judges the Next Day, Who were Going the Western Circuit* (London, 1690)

---*Strange and Wonderful News from Linconshire, Or, A Dreadful Account of a most Inhumane and Bloody Murther Committed upon the Body of One Mr. Carter, by the Contrivance of His Elder Brother, Who had Soon After found Out, by the Appearance of a most Dreadful and Terrible Ghost, Sent by Almighty Providence for the Discovery as also, the Manner of its Appearance in several Shapes and Forms, with Fresh Bleeding Wounds, Still Pursuing the Murtherer from Place to Place, with the Relation how He Endeavoured to Conjure it Down, and of its Appearance and Declaration of the Murtherers, and of the Confession of the Murderer when Apprehended, with Many Other Remarkable Circmstances / this was Communicated in a Letter to a Gentleman of very Good Quality in London, the Truth of which is Attested Under the Hands of George Smith, James Simson and Gregory Wilson, Men of Good Repute and Fame, Living Near Stampford* (London, 1679)

---*Strange and Wonderful News from Ratcliffe being a Sad but True Relation of the Apparition of Two Spirits, Viz. an Antient Gentlewoman and Her Daughter; which Occasions the Present Confusions and Disturbances, in the House by Ratcliff=Cross* (London, 1690)

---*A Strange and Wonderful Relation from Shadvvel Or, the Devil Visible being a most True and Faithful Account how the Devil in Human Shape, on the 3d. of this Instant July, made His Appearance to a Gentlewoman there, (a Person that had Formerly Lived Well, but Now Reduced to Poverty) with a Bag of Money in One Hand, and a Knife in the Other, Tempting Her to Murther One of Her Children. as also how She Refused, and Resisted His Temptation, Imploring the Prayers of Her Neighbours, of Whom, Two Plainly Saw this Evil Spirit, Going Forth of the House* (London, 1674)

---*A Strange and Wonderfull Discovery of a Horrid and Cruel Murther Committed Fourteen Years since upon the Person of Robert Eliot, of London, at Great Driffeld in the East-Riding of the County of York Discovered in September Last by the Frequent Apparitions of a Spirit in several Shapes and Habits Unto Isabel Binnigton, the Wife of William Binnington, the Now Inhabitants in the House Where this most Execrable Murther was Committed: Together with a Discourse that Passed between the Spirit and the Said Isabel Binnington After its First Appearing / Taken upon Oath at the Examination of the Said Isabel, before Sir Thomas Rennington, Knight, and Thomas Crompton, Esq., Two of His Majesties Justices of Peace for that Riding, Septemb. 2, 1662* (London, 1662)

---*A Strange Apparition: Or, the Second Meeting of Two Self-Murthering Lovers. Phillis and Phillander. Mistaken Phillis Kill'd Her Self, Thinking Philander Slain; Philander Quickly Followed Her, and Now they'r Met again. To the Tune of, Oh Cruel Bloody Fate* (London, 1681)

---*A Strange, but True, Relation of a most Horrid and Bloudy Murder Committed on a Traveller about Thirty Years Ago in the West of England ... here is also an Account of an Apparition to a Certain Person that was made Executor of a Will* (London, 1678)

--- *A Strange, True, and Dreadful Relation, of the Devils appearing to Thomas Cox a Hackney-Coach-Man who lives in Cradle-Alley in Baldwins-Gardens. First, in the Habit of a Gentleman with a Roll of Parchment in his Hand, and then in the Shape of a Bear, which afterwards vanish'd away in a Flash of Fire, at Eight of the Clock on Friday night, October the 31th. 1684* (London, 1684)

- The Suffolk Miracle. Or A Relation of a Young Man Who a Month After His Death Appeared to His Sweetheart and Carryed Her Behind Him Fourty Miles in Two Hours Time, and was Never seen After but in the Grave. To the Tune of, My Bleeding Heart, &c.* (London, 1678-81)
- A Summons from a True-Protestant Conjurer to Cethegus's Ghost to Appear Septemb. 19, 1682* (London, 1682)
- A True and Impartial Account of the Apparition of John Freeman, Esq; to a Young Lady at Dawney-Court, in Buckinghamshire. Also a True Copy of the Ghost's Letter Deliver'd by Himself to the Young Lady, Who is One of the Daughters of Esquire J---Gs, of Heese in the County of Middlesex.* (London, 1696)
- A True and Impartial Relation of a Wonderful Apparition that Happen'd in the Royal Camp in Flanders, the Beginning of this Instant September, 1692, Concerning King William. / In a Letter to a Gentleman in London, from His Friend, a Captain in the King's Camp* (Edinburgh, 1692)
- A True and most Dreadfull Discourse of a Woman Possessed with the Deuill Who in the Likenesse of a Headlesse Beare Fetched Her Out of Her Bedd, and in the Presence of Seuen Persons, most Straungely Roulled Her Thorow Three Chambers, and Doune a High Paire of Staiers, on the Fower and Twentie of may Last. 1584. at Dichet in Sommersetshire. A Matter as Miraculous as Euer was seen in our Time* (London, 1584)
- The True Lovers Ghost. False Men do often Prove Unkind to those that would to them be True; then Carefully My Story Mind, the Like before You Never Knew. To the Tune of, Tender Hearts of London-City* (London, 1671)
- A True Relation of an Apparition in the Likenesse of a Bird with a White Brest, that Appeared Hovering Over the Deathbeds of some of the Children of Mr. James Oxenham of Sale Monachorum, Devon. Gent. Confirmed by Sundry Witnesses as Followeth in the Ensuing Treatise.* (London, 1641)
- A True Relation of the Dreadful Ghost Appearing to One John Dyer in VWinchester Yard Near St. Mary Ovres in Southwarke; Taken to be the Spirit of His Late Wife Jane Dyer, Who Departed this Life some Time since, with an Account of the Affrightful Shapes, and its Pursuing Him from Place to Place. Likewise is Added another Account of the Penitent Murtherer, Robert*

Congden, Who was Executed in Brook-Street, Near Ratclif-Cross, and Afterwards Hung Up in Chains between Mile-End and Bow. (London, 1691)

---*A True Relation of the Horrid Ghost of a Woman, which Hath Frequently been seen in various Habits, in the House of Nicholas Broaday, at the Three Mariners in Depthford upon the Third, Fourth, and Sixth of this Instant April, 1673. by Peter Griffith, Robert Predam, and John Stolliard, Belonging to His Majesty's Ship, Called the Monck, and several Others of the Family (London, 1673)*

---*The Tyburn-Ghost, Or, the Strange Downfall of the Gallows a most True Relation how the Famous Triple-Tree Neer Paddinton was on Tuesday-Night Last (the Third of this Instant September) Wonderfully Pluckt Up by the Roots, and Demolisht by Certain Evil-Spirits: To which is Added, Squire Ketch's Lamentation for the Loss of His Shop, &c. (London, 1678)*

---*Unterricht Wie Man Gespenster Und Gespenster-Geschichte Prüfen Soll: Gewiesen, Durch Nöthige Interrogatoria Zu Dem Zeugnisse Der Reinen Wahrheit Herrn Jeremias Heinischen, Predigers Zu Gröben, Von den Würckungen Eines so Genannten Kobolds, in Der Pfarr-Wohnung Dasselbst (1723)*

---*Der Vielförmige Hintzelmann Oder Umbständliche Und Merckwürdige Erzählung Von Einem Geist, so Sich Auf Dem Hause Hudemühlen, Und Hernach Zu Estrup Im Lande Lüneburg Unter Vielfältigen Gestalten ... Sehen Lassen / Aus bißhero Noch Niemahls Gedruckten Nachrichten Colligirt/ Und Ihrer Curiosität Halber Zum Druck Befordert/ Und Mit Unterschiedlichen Historien Von Erscheinungen Und Gespenstern Vermehret/ Und Durch Kupffer Vorgestellet (Leipzig, 1704)*

---*A Vvarning for Maidens to the Tune of, the Ladies Fall (London, 1650)*

---*The Vvonder of Vvonders, Or, a True Relation of a Late Strange and Miraculous Accident that Happened to One that Dyed in the Ship Called, the Dunbar, Who After He had been Buried One Shore Above Five Daies, Rise again, and Standing Upright in His Grave, Called to the Fleet with a Shrill Voice at Noon-Day, Telling them the Events that should Happen to all those Ships that Went Towards the Sound. with the several Speeches made by Him, to the Wonderful Astonishment and Admiration of Divers of the Fleet, Who were both Hearers and Eye-Witnesses, and Will Justifie the Truth of this Great Miracle. with a Great and Strange*

Apparition of Two Armies that Appeared in the North of England on Thursday Last, with the Exact Manner of their Engaging One another at Noon-Day with the Thundring Noise both of Great and Small Shot (London, 1659)

---*The Vvonderful Blazing Star with the Dreadful Apparition of Two Armies in the Air. the One Out of the North, the Other Out of the South, as in the Figure Above is Represented* (London, 1681)

---*A Warning for Married Women* (London, 1685)

---*The West-Country Miser: Or, an Unconscionable Farmer's Miserable End: Who having Hoarded Up His Corn in Hopes it would Rise to a Higher Price, was Disappointed so that He Fell into Despair, and Died at Last by the Fright of an Apparition. Tune of, Love's Sweet Passion: Or, Fond Boy, &c.* (London, 1688)

---*The Wonder of this Age: Or, God's Miraculous Revenge Against Murder. being a Relation of an Undoubted Truth Out of the West. how the Skull of a Person (Murdered about Thirty Years Agoe, in an Inn) was found with a Linnen Cap Thereon, Still Whole, with the Two Letters Wherewith it was Marked, Plain to be seen, Though it has Lain so Many Years in the Earth. how Likewise an Apparition Oblig'd One that was Lately Come to Live in that House, to Divulge it ... the Truth of this Relation Will be Attested by Many Whole-Sale-Men that were at the Last Fair at Exeter ... and Now, upon the Licensers Enquiry, since the Writing of this Paper, the Particulars have been Verifi'd by Divers Other Persons, and by One that Affirms He was Present at the Examination* (London, 1677)

---*Wonderful and Strange News from Scotland, being a True and Full Relation of a Person Lately Deceased at the Town of Dumfreez, Whose Corps could by no Art of Man, Or Strength of Cattle, be Removed from the Place Where it Lay. and when the House Wherein it was, was Wholly Burnt Down to the Ground, the Body, Coffin, and Table Whereon it Stood, Remained Whole and Untoucht, and so Continues to the Great Astonishment of all Spectators. / Faithfully Communicated by a Person of Quality, in a Letter from the Said Town of Dumfreez. Dated Septemb. 8. 1673.* (London, 1673)

---*The Worlds Wonder being a True Relation of the Strange and Dreadful Apparitions seen in the Air, on Tuesday Last was Seven-Night, at New-Market-Heath, and in the Western Parts:*

Wherein You might Discern the Flaming-Sword, the Fiery Dragon, Sparkling-Coals, Burning-Beams, Beating of Drums, Sounding of Trumpets, and a Desperate Conflict between Two Armies. Likewise, the Presenting of the Earth with a Mighty Thunder-Bolt, ... and the Taking of it Up, and Carrying it to Justice Fosters, Where Many Hundreds of People Resort to See it, to the Great Admiration of all that Behold it. as also, the Strange and Wonderful Ringing of the Bells, by Four White Spirits in the Perfect Shape of Men, at Ferry-Briggs in York-Shire, on the First of this Instant March, Betwixt 12 and One of the Clock in the Morning. with the Minister, Clerk, and Others Going to them, Demanding, in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, what they Meant, and what their Business was? (London, 1659)

---*Wunderbare Schröckliche Neue Zeitunge Von Dreien Mercklichen Himelszeichen (Strasbourg, 1574)*

---*Young Bateman's Ghost: Or, a Godly Warning to all Maidens, by the Example of Gods Judgment Shewn upon One German's Wife of Clifton, in the County of Nottingham; Who Lying in Child-Bed, was Borne Away and Never Heard of After. (London, 1710)*

---*Zwo Warhafftige Neue Zeitungen/|| Die Erste.|| Auss Venedig/ Dieses || 1600. Jahrs/ Sehr Erschrecklich Zu Lesen Vnd || Zu Hören. Welches Geschehen Den Letzten Junij Nach || Dem Newen Calender ... || Die Andere Zeitung || Eine Abschweliche Vnd Zuuor Nie Erhærte er=||schreckliche Zaubereyen/ Mærdt Vnnd Diebereyen/ Von || Vater/ Mutter/ Zweyen Söhnen Vnd Zweyen Töchtermännern || Geschehen/ Welche in ... Muenchen || Im Beyerland Sind Gefænglich Eingezogen || Worden.|| Vnd Hernach Den 26. Julij Dieses 1600. Jahrs ... || Allda Verurtheilet Vnd Gerichtet Sind.|| (1600)*

Aubrey, John, *Miscellanies upon various Subjects by John Aubrey, Esq. F.R.S. A New Edition with Considerable Improvements to which is Prefixed some Account of His Life (London, 1784)*

---*Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme: By John Aubrey, R.S.S. 1686-87. Edited and Annotated by James Britten, F.L.S. (London: The Folk-lore Society, 1881)*

B., W., *Strange and Wonderful News from the Lords in the Tovver, Or, A Dialogue between them and My Lord Staffords Ghost (London, 1681)*

Bake, Bernhard, *Schrift-Mässiger Bericht Von Gespensten: Aus Sonderbahren Ursachen in Sechs Gewisse Sätze Abgefasset/ Und Aus Gottes Wort Kürztlich Zu Sammen Getragen / Von M. Bernhard Baken/ Oberpfarherren Zu Haldenschleben.* (Magdeburg, 1656)

Baxter, Richard, *the Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits Fully Evinced by the Unquestionable Histories of Apparitions, Operations, Witchcrafts, Voices, &c. Proving the Immortality of Souls, the Malice and Misery of the Devils, and the Damned, and the Blessedness of the Justified. Written for the Conviction of Sadduces & Infidels, by Richard Baxter* (London, 1691)

---*Die Gewißheit Der Geister: Gründlich Dargethan Durch Unlaugbare Historien von Erscheinungen, Wirkungen, Zaubereyen, Stimmen [Et]c.; Zum Beweiß Der Unsterblichkeit Der Seele ... / Ehemals in Englischer Sprache Geschrieben Von ... Richard Baxter. Nunmehr Aber Ins Teutsche Übersezt* (Nuremberg, 1731)

---*The Reasons of the Christian Religion the First Part, of Godliness, Proving by Natural Evidence the being of God ...: The Second Part, of Christianity, Proving by Evidence Supernatural and Natural, the Certain Truth of the Christian Belief ... / by Richard Baxter ...; also an Appendix Defending the Soul's Immortality Against the Somatists Or Epicureans and Other Pseudo-Philosophers.* (London, 1667)

Beaumont, John, *An Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise of Spirits, Apparitions, Witchcrafts, and Other Magical Practices. Containing an Account of the Genii Or Familiar Spirits, both Good and Bad, that are Said to Attend Men in this Life; and what Sensible Perceptions some Persons have had of them: (Particularly the Author's Own Experience for Many Years.) also of Appearances of Spirits After Death; Divine Dreams, Divinations, Second Sighted Persons, &c. Likewise the Power of Witches, and the Reality of Other Magical Operations, Clearly Asserted. with a Refutation of Dr. Bekker's World Bewitch'd; and Other Authors that have Opposed the Belief of them* (London, 1705)

Becker, Andreas, *Dissertatio Juridica, De Jure Spectrorum, Oder: In Wie Weit Jemand Aus Furcht Vor Gespenster Sich Ein Recht Anmassen Koenne / Qvam Præside Dn. Joh. Samuele Stryckio J.U.D. Professore Publico Ordinario Et Facultatis Juridicæ Decano, in Alma Fridericiana Anno 1700 d. 25. Junii Respondendo Propugnavit Andreas Becker, Hal. Magde* (Halle, 1738)

Beer, Johann, *German Winter Nights*, trans. by J. R. Russell (Bath: Camden House, 1999)

---Johann Beer, *Sein Leben, Von Ihm Selbst Erzählt: Herausgegeben Von Adolf Schmiedecke Mit Einem Vorwort Von Richard Alewyn* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965)

Behm, Martin, *Die Drey Grossen Landtplagen/ Krieg/ Tewrung/ Pestilentz/ Welche Jetzundt Vor Der Welt Ende/ in Vollem Schwang Gehen: Den Frommen Kindern Gottes ... in XXIII. Predigten Erkleret / Durch Martinum Bohemum Laubanensem, Predigern Daselbst* (Wittenberg, 1601)

Bekker, Balthasar, *The World Bewitch'd, Or, an Examination of the Common Opinions Concerning Spirits their Nature, Power, Administration and Operations, as also the Effects Men are Able to Produce by their Communication: Divided into IV Parts / by Balthazar Bekker...; Vol. I Translated from a French Copy, Approved of and Subscribed by the Author's Own Hand* (London, 1695)

Berckenmeyer, Paul Ludolph, *Vermehrter Curieuser Antiquarius, Das Ist: Allerhand Auserlesene Geographische Und Historische Merckwürdigkeiten/ so in Denen Europæischen Ländern Zu Finden / Aus Berühmter Männer Reisen Zusammen Getragen/ Und Mit Einem Zweyfachen Register Versehen/ Von P. L. Berckenmeyern* (Hamburg, 1711)

Bernd, Adam, *Eigene Lebens-Beschreibung: Samt Einer Aufrichtigen Entdeckung, Und Deutlichen Beschreibung Einer Der Grösten, Obwol großen Theils Noch Unbekannten Leibes- Und Gemüths-Plage, WelcheGott Zuweilen Über Die Welt-Kinder, Und Auch Wohl Über Seine Eigene Kinder Verhänget; Den Unwissenden Zum Unterricht, Den Gelehrten Zu Weiterm Nachdencken, Den Sündern Zum Schrecken, Und Den Betrübten, Und Angefochtenen Zum Troste* (Leipzig, 1738)

Blount, Charles, *Anima Mundi, Or, an Historical Narration of the Opinions of the Ancients Concerning Man's Soul After this Life According to Unenlight[e]Ned Nature / by Charles Blount, Gent* (London, 1679)

Boaistuau, Pierre, *Certaine Secrete Wonders of Nature Containing a Descriptio[n] of Sundry Strange Things, Seming Monstrous in our Eyes and Iudgement, Bicause we are Not Priuie to the Reasons of them. Gathered Out of Diuers Learned Authors as Well Greeke as Latine,*

*Sacred as Profane. by E. Fenton. Seene and Allowed According to the Order
Appointed* (London, 1569)

Bodin, Jean, *Anderer Theil Oder Anhang Johannis Bodini Dæmonomaniaë, Handelnd Von Des
Leidigen Satans Macht Und Gewalt Über Die Menschen/ so Wohl Durch Ihm Selbst/ Als Seine
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Geschehenen Erschrecklichen Historien Und Warhafftigen Geschichten Besessener Und Vom
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etc. Verdolmetscht Und Mit Einem Bericht Von Den Sinnbildern Wie Auch Hundert Exempeln
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Iesuit, and Diuers Romish Priestes His Wicked Associates. Where-Vnto are Annexed the
Copies of the Confessions, and Examinations of the Parties Themselves, which were
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Und Wantzleben Wie Auch Des Closters Gottes-Gnade Sambt Der Darzu Gehörigen Amt-
Häusern, Dörffer, Kirchen Und Predigern Calbischer Inspection, Im Holtz-Creyß Des
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Deßgleichen/ Von Verzauberungen/ Verblendungen/ Vergifften/ Gespensten/ Verwandlungen/
Hexen Und Unholden/ Und Deren Rechtlichen Bestraffungen. Beneben Einem Sonderlichen
Tractat/ Von Der Hellen ... Mit Angehengtem Bedencken Von Denen so Sich Selbst ... Umbs
Leben Bringen / Alles Auß H. Göttlicher Schrifft/ Der Gelehrten Schrifften/ Auch Alten Und
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Exempel/ be-||wärten/ Glaubwürdigen/ Alten Vnd Newen Scribenten/ ... an Tag Geben. ||:
Sampt Etlicher Hingerichten Zäuberischer Weiber Gethaner be-||kanntnuß/ Examination,
Prob/ Vrgicht Vnd Straff/ ... Jetzt Auffs Neuw|| Zusammen in Ein Corpus Bracht. || Allen
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